



Agnes, a midwife, is helping a mother to introduce breastfeeding to her newborn
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Sierra Leone

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 2



Situation in Numbers



3,300,000 children in need of humanitarian assistance



4,800,000 people in need (UN Inter-Agency Dec 2020)

Reporting Period: 1 January to 30 June 2021

Highlights

Over 1.5 million U5 children vaccinated during combined IPV-routine immunization and catch-up campaign in response to the circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) outbreak.

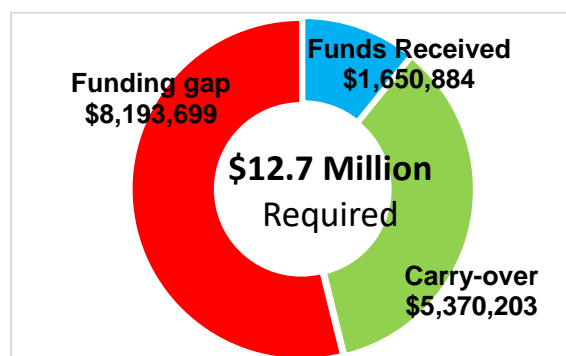
UNICEF supported vaccine deployment and supply chain management of 138,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines received through COVAX and the African Union.

First batch payments completed under the COVID-19 Social Safety Net programme reaching more than 32,000 households. Plans to include people with disabilities in second batch of enrolment.

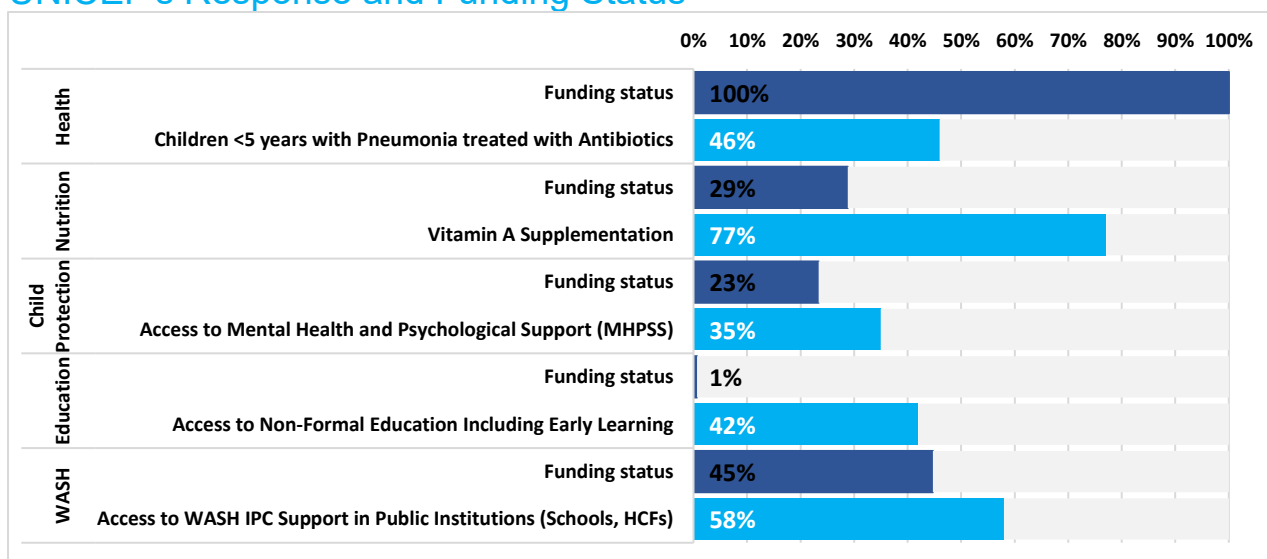
UNICEF supported Risk Communication and Community Engagement related to COVID-19, EVD preparedness and the Polio Outbreak through the distribution of materials and community engagement of 582,000 people.

UNICEF Appeal 2021

US\$ 12.7 million



UNICEF's Response and Funding Status



Funding Overview and Partnerships

UNICEF appeals for USD 12.7 million to sustain provision of life-saving services for women and children in Sierra Leone. In 2020 and 2021, the World Bank, the United Kingdom Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Government of Iceland, the Government of Japan, the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Government of Sierra Leone, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the African Development Bank, GAVI The Vaccine Alliance, Global Partnership for Education, UNOCHA (CERF), the Belgian Committee for UNICEF, the French Committee for UNICEF, and other donors have generously contributed to UNICEF Sierra Leone humanitarian response for COVID-19. UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to all public and private donors for the contributions received. However, the 2021 HAC still has a funding gap of 64%. Without sufficient funding over 2.9 million people will not have access to adequate sanitation, and over 1.1 million women and girls who face increased risk of violence will not receive the psychosocial support they need.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

As of 30 June 2021, there were 5,575 confirmed COVID-19 cases out of 187,548 tests performed, 100 deaths and 3,522 recoveries in Sierra Leone. As of 28 June 2021, 145,825 people had received a first dose of vaccination and 88,870 people were fully vaccinated with a second dose.¹ In mid-June 2021, the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) declared that a third wave of COVID-19 was in circulation and imposed new restrictions.

Additional emergency needs have arisen during the reporting period as the implications of COVID-19, the polio outbreak in late 2020 and the resurgence of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in neighbouring Guinea in February 2021 are beginning to unfold. The compounding effects of multiple simultaneous emergencies, including frequent fire outbreaks in urban slum settlements and other smaller scale emergencies threaten to stall or reverse progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The country remains in a state of vulnerability even though the EVD outbreaks in Sierra Leone and Guinea were declared over in 2016 and 2021 respectively.

UNICEF continues to support the GoSL in actively pursuing preparedness measures to address the threat of EVD spillover to Sierra Leone while simultaneously preventing and addressing fire outbreaks, responding to COVID-19, including vaccinations and rolling out a polio campaign.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Health



Thirty-year-old Mohamed Koroma received his first shot of the COVID-19 vaccine at Jaiama-Nimokoro town in Kono District. The vaccine will protect him from getting seriously sick from coronavirus.

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¹ Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) Situational Report No.457. 30 June 2021.

During the reporting period, UNICEF in collaboration with the Directorate of Nursing and Midwifery of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS), Nursing and Midwifery Board, and Nursing Association completed the rollout of a training programme for 322 trainers and 5,282 health workers in Periphery Health Units (PHUs) and hospitals nationwide on continuity of essential maternal, neonatal and child health, and nutrition (MNCH+N) services in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the significant reduction in routine immunization service uptake in 2020, the combined IPV-routine immunization and catch-up campaign was conducted from 15-20 June 2021, targeting children who were born between January 2016 and November 2017 with one dose of IPV and vaccinating children who defaulted in their routine immunization schedule with missed doses. In response to the circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) outbreak, over 1.5 million children under five years of age were vaccinated with nOPV2 during the reporting period. A first round of vaccinations was held on 28-31 May 2021, followed by a second round from 2-5 July 2021.

UNICEF supported the MoHS in COVID-19 vaccine deployment (supply chain and risk communication). To date, the country received 96,000 and 42,000 doses of AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccines through the COVAX facility and the African Union respectively, as well as 200,000 Sinopharm vaccines from China.



A Health worker receives her first shot of the COVID-19 vaccine in Waterloo, Sierra Leone
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Prior to the polio campaigns and COVID-19 vaccine deployment, UNICEF procured 11 sets of solar refrigerators to support the establishment of district vaccine stores at Falaba and Karene; 171 sets of solar refrigerators for health facilities across the country; and 260 cold boxes to strengthen the cold chain system for immunization.

During the reporting period and following a comprehensive health facility assessment and planning exercise for oxygen supply configuration, UNICEF signed a contract to procure three medium-sized oxygen plants. The plants will be installed and commissioned in Makeni, Bo, and Kenema Regional Hospitals.

Nutrition

A decline in community nutrition coverage was observed in Q2 2021 at 4 per cent compared to Q2 2020 coverage at 9 per cent. The low coverage is partly due to incomplete reporting and delays in the recruitment of Community Health Workers (CHWs) who conduct quarterly nutrition screening in communities. Out of the screened children, the rate of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) was 10 per cent and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) rate was 4 per cent, which is slightly higher than 9 per cent and 3 per cent respectively in the Q2 2020. This is possibly due to rising food insecurity and the implications of COVID-19 on household income. Close monitoring of the nutrition situation is required.

From January to May 2021, 16,474 severely malnourished children (7,940 boys and 8,534 girls) were admitted across 791 health facilities offering outpatient care for SAM without medical complications and 21 hospitals offering inpatient care for SAM with medical complications. This represents a 4.5 per cent decrease in admissions from the same period last year (17,256 cases) possibly due to the low nutrition screening coverage in Q2 2021 and a weak referral system. Out of the 16,474 SAM children admitted, 14,781 children

were discharged with 92.25 per cent cure rate, 6.41 per cent defaulter rate, 0.04 per cent non-response rate, and 1.29 per cent death rate.

With the generous financial contribution from the Government of Japan, United Kingdom and United States Fund for UNICEF, UNICEF Sierra Leone was able to procure 37,570 cartons of Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), 395 cartons of F-100, 226 cartons of F-75, and 70 cartons of ReSoMal, sufficient to rehabilitate 37,570 severely malnourished children. However, a critical break in supply is expected by June 2022 given that the IMAM programme currently has very limited funding.

In collaboration with MoHS and Helen Keller International, and with financial support from Global Affairs Canada and in-kind contribution from Nutrition International, UNICEF Sierra Leone was able to provide 1,302,767 children 6-59 months of age nationwide with vitamin A supplementation from January to June 2021. UNICEF procured 2,019,400 deworming tablets to support 89 per cent of the biannual deworming requirements (1,009,700 out of the 1,140,404 children 12-59 months nationwide). The vitamin A supplementation and deworming catch-up campaign was integrated into IPV-routine immunization, and 10 out of 16 districts have reported vitamin A supplementation coverage of 75 per cent and above. To ensure uninterrupted delivery of these essential services, support for vitamin A and deworming programme including supplies is needed from April 2022 onwards.

As a Nutrition sub-cluster co-lead with MoHS, UNICEF supported the procurement of 162 cartons of RUTF biscuits to be pre-positioned for EVD response in line with the Nutrition Cluster's EVD emergency preparedness plan.

Child Protection

The Psychosocial Support (PSS) Pillar led by the Ministry of Social Welfare (MSW) continued to monitor children in quarantine in all districts. During the reporting period, a total of 454 children (238 boys, 216 girls) and 1,201 adults (536 male, 665 female) received PSS in the context of COVID-19.

UNICEF also supported the National Secretariat for the Reduction of Teenage Pregnancy (NSRTP) to conduct radio programme discussions in seven districts to disseminate information on gender-based violence (GBV), teenage pregnancy, child marriage, and protection issues related to adolescent girls, with an estimated reach of 50,000 people. UNICEF continued to support the '116' toll-free helpline for GBV operated by the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs (MoGCA) which, during the reporting period, logged 61 cases of rape, sexual assault and other forms of violence against women and children, as well as incidents of child abuse.

In partnership with two Civil Society Organizations (CSO), training on COVID-19 response and Psychological First Aid (PFA) was conducted for 120 government and civil society staff; 152 cases involving COVID-19 affected children were followed up by social workers. Awareness raising sessions on COVID-19 vaccination also took place in all districts with active participation of PSS Pillar partners during the first quarter. Through the Pillar, a total of 1,671 adults (788 male, 883 female) were reported to have been reached with key messages on COVID-19 vaccination in nine districts.

Education

UNICEF continued to support the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) and the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE) to ensure learning continuity across all levels of the education spectrum in Sierra Leone. During the period, UNICEF in partnership with the MBSSE provided Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) that were in stock at the UNICEF warehouse to 434 pre-primary and primary schools, benefiting 182,663 children and 5,247 teachers from the Western Area in line with the MBSSE's Strategic COVID-19 Response Plan developed by the Ministry.

UNICEF supported end-user joint monitoring of MBSSE, Local Councils, CSOs and others of teaching and learning materials that UNICEF distributed to schools in 12 districts to support MBSSE's COVID-19 response initiative, and of handwashing stations in eight districts. UNICEF also supported the MBSSE's Communications Pillar to develop and distribute flyers on COVID-19 prevention to 2,500 school in all 16 districts, erected 14 billboards, and supplied 200 handwashing stations to the MTHE for COVID-19 prevention in colleges, institutes, and universities.



To keep schools safe for learning during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, the practice of handwashing with soap under running water, continues to be supported.
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In response to a fire disaster incident at Susan's Bay in Freetown in March 2021, UNICEF provided TLMs, recreation kits, school in a box, school uniforms and essential items to 700 school children, and 50 ECD kits to affected pre-primary and nursery schools. Also, 170 teachers from 80 schools benefited from PSS training to provide counselling services to the affected children and parents.

UNICEF provided technical support to the MBSSE to develop an Education Sector Ebola Preparedness and Response Plan following the resurgence of Ebola cases in neighbouring Guinea. The draft plan replicates existing COVID-19 strategy and response framework guided by global best practices to ensure a safe and responsible operation of schools and learning continuity.

WASH

In collaboration with Guma Valley Water Company and the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), UNICEF provided household WASH supplies and services to 1,597 families (7,093 people) affected by the fire outbreak in Susan's Bay through the installation and networking of drinking water storage tanks with a total storage capacity of 40,000L.

UNICEF continued to work with MoHS and the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) to provide solar powered boreholes, water supply and improved sanitation services to 45 health care facilities (11 Government Hospitals and 34 PHUs) designated as COVID-19 treatment centres. Water supply from the boreholes of 31 PHUs was also extended to host communities, reaching an estimated 25,812 people and 14 schools.

Following the resurgence of EVD in neighbouring Guinea, UNICEF in collaboration with the Directorate of Health Security and Emergencies (DHSE) and the WASH Pillar developed the EVD preparedness strategy, followed by the training of 175 out of 215 target health care workers across five priority border districts on standard WASH/IPC for effective EVD prevention and control. Distribution of IPC material will be conducted in July for 8 priority districts.

Social Protection

Payments under the COVID-19 Social Safety Net (SSN) programme were completed for the first batch of beneficiaries reaching more than 32,000 households, and planning is ongoing for enrolment of the second batch of beneficiaries. A registration exercise will be undertaken to add People with Disabilities to the national social protection registry as target beneficiaries of the SSN programme.

Payments were also completed for the COVID-19 Emergency Cash Transfer (ECT) programme for households of informal workers in urban areas.

Both payment schemes included Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Community Monitors, staff from the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and members of the

inter-ministerial Technical Steering Committee for Social Protection who were trained on GBV risk mitigation in humanitarian and social cash transfers in April 2021.

Communications for Development and Accountability to Affected Populations

UNICEF continued to support Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) response to COVID-19 pandemic, EVD preparedness and Polio Outbreak campaigns through the distribution of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, social mobilization, and community engagement activities such as radio programmes.

Efforts to integrate public information, social mobilization and community engagement strategies on COVID-19 and EVD resulted in a network of 7,023 trained social and community mobilizers – ranging from religious leaders, Kombra and SUNI network members, and Community-Led Action (CLA) mobilizers – engaging over 582,000 people through community engagement activities, and reaching an estimated 3.5 million people.

A social listening platform, with a unique reporting tool and dashboard, has been piloted since June 2021 to help improve tracking, analysis and response to offline and online rumours, misinformation, and concerns on the ground.

In collaboration with the national Public Information, Risk Communication and Social Mobilization (PIRCSM) Pillar, UNICEF supported district social mobilization teams with training, planning and communication/transportation support for activity implementation and supervision.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

UNICEF coordinates national humanitarian health activities through the Public Health National Emergency Operations Centre (PHNEOC) and district level activities through the District Emergency Operations Centres (DEOCs).

UNICEF co-leads the COVID-19, Polio and EVD Risk Communication and Social Mobilization (RCSM) pillars, supporting coordination for rapid development of RCSM strategies and costed plan, as well as active engagement and update of RCSM partners on priority needs, activities and gaps to ensure active implementation.

UNICEF co-chairs the Nutrition Cluster for the COVID-19 response, which provides leadership and systematic coordination for timely response to nutritional emergencies in the country through operational planning, preparedness, response and monitoring mechanism.

Together with WHO and UNFPA, UNICEF advocates with the MoHS for much needed attention to ensure continuation of essential health and nutrition service delivery, which in 2020 led to the creation of 'Non-COVID-19 service' sub-group as part of the Case Management Pillar within the EOC.

UNICEF provides significant support to the Medical Logistics Pillar within the EOC for supply forecasting, technical advice for specification, coordination, and resource mobilisation as the main procurement agency for COVID-19 supplies (PPE, IPC, drugs, oxygen delivery and other medical equipment and commodities), as well as non-COVID-19 health and nutrition supplies (vaccines, nutrition therapeutic supplies, and Free Health Care (FHC) drugs).

UNICEF co-chairs the WASH cluster with the MoWR and MoHS, and together with the MSW, UNICEF provides technical assistance for activities within the PSS Pillar as its co-chair. UNICEF coordinates integrated GBV interventions across the MoGCA, MBSSE and the NSRTP. Monthly child welfare coordination and emergency preparedness meetings are held in six districts (Bombali, Tonkolili, Moyamba, Bo, Pujehun and Kailahun).

Human Interest Stories and External Media

Human Interest Story:

Water and sanitation improvements help health service delivery during COVID-19

Port Loko, Sierra Leone - Mainty Dumbuya lives just a stone's throw away from Kuranko Community Health Centre in Port Loko. Over the past six months, she has watched with great excitement as work was done to install a piped water system at the health centre.

She has witnessed deep trenches being dug, massive water tanks being mounted on concrete stands and water basins being fitted to bring flowing water into the health centre, as part of efforts to promote good health and sanitation at this health facility which services a population of over 7,000 people.

Mainty is happy that the new features at the Health Centre will ensure that proper hygiene and sanitation are practiced when she delivers her second baby in a few weeks.



Expectant mother, Mainty is happy with the improvements made to bring water to the health centre ©UNICEF Sierra Leone/2021/Mutseyekwa

“I have been worried about having a safe delivery during this period of COVID-19, but I am very happy because the installation of water systems at Kuranko Community Health Centre will protect me from diseases,” says Mainty, whose frequent visits to the health centre for antenatal classes had been gripped with fears of contracting COVID-19 prior to this massive infrastructure overhaul at Kuranko Community Health Centre. See the full story [here](#).

External Media:

UNICEF contributed to national efforts to raise awareness on COVID-19. Through the UNICEF Sierra Leone Twitter, Facebook and Instagram pages, more than 130 messages on the prevention of COVID-19, the [impact of COVID-19](#) on children, the [importance of vaccinations](#) and UNICEF's [response to the pandemic were posted and shared](#). Messages were also shared on television, radio and in print media.

UNICEF worked with local influencers, including a group of 50 social media influencers, nominated by the National COVID-19 Emergency Response Centre (NACOVERC) to be Share4Mama Salone Ambassadors. The Share4Mama Salone Ambassadors used their platforms to share messages on the importance of wearing masks and getting vaccinated. Comedian [Kindo Armani](#) and songstress [Fantacee Wiz](#) also helped to spread messages on the importance of vaccination through video messages on social media and on national television.

In June 2021, a [parenting dialogue](#) on how to promote good mental health and parenting during the COVID-19 pandemic was held with stakeholders, experts, parents and caregivers sharing information, experiences and insights. The discussion was streamed on Facebook and national television to ensure a wide audience.

UNICEF Sierra Leone continued to engage the local media with new information about COVID-19 through local and global press releases. Within the reporting period, a press release was developed to acknowledge

the [Government of Japan for its contribution of USD\\$700 000](#) to respond to impact of COVID-19 on child rights.

UNICEF also worked with the National Public Radio of the United States of America, to demonstrate the impact of the pandemic of children, some of whom are being forced into child labor, while another story focused on the importance of solar powered refrigerators to support the vaccination programme in the country.

- [What U.S. Vaccine Donations Mean For Sierra Leone And Africa](#)
- [This 14-Year-Old Family Breadwinner Is Part Of The Rise In Child Labor](#)

The [UNICEF Sierra Leone](#) website is regularly updated with stories on the response to COVID-19.

Next SitRep: 31 October 2021

UNICEF Sierra Leone Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal: <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/>

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Annex A Summary of Programme Results

Sector	Overall Needs	UNICEF and IPs Response	
		2021 target	Total results
Health	620,700		
# children < 5 years with pneumonia treated at primary health care facilities and in community with oral antibiotics		314,000	144,528
# of children aged 6 to 59 months vaccinated against measles		450,000	194,848
# children < 23 months who missed their scheduled vaccination (defaulters) traced and referred for vaccination at facility or outreach site		23,000	7,733
# people reached through messaging on access to health services		1,800,000	3,200,000
Nutrition	1,900,000		
# primary caregivers of children 0-23 months receiving with IYCF counselling		305,775	38,495
# children aged 6-59 months with SAM admitted for treatment		38,000	13,636 (total treated as cured), 16,474 (new admissions) (7,940 male; 8,534 female)
# children aged 6-59 months receiving vitamin A supplementation every 6 months		1,500,000	1,157,193
Child Protection	1,100,000		
# children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support		20,000	1,655 (total) 238 boys, 216 girls, 536 men, 665 women
# people with access to safe channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse		1,800,000	78,101
# women, girls and boys accessing GBV risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions		63,000	50,000
Education	3,265,000		
# children receiving individual learning materials		60,000	203,964
# children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning		600,000	95,081
WASH	2,900,000		
# people accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene		100,000	32,905
# people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services		100,000	7,093
# of people engaged and reached with accessible information on COVID-19 prevention especially on targeted messages on handwashing and use of WASH services		350,000	7,093
# of institutions (HCF, schools, maternities) supported with a minimum WASH & IPC package and demonstrating IPC improvements		100	58
Social Protection	160,000 HHs		
# households benefitting from new or additional social assistance measures provided by governments to respond to COVID-19 with UNICEF support		65,000 HHs (572,718 individuals)	60,594 HHs (363,564 individuals)
C4D/Community Engagement			
# people participating in engagement actions (for social and behavioural change)		350,000	582,000

Annex B Funding Status

Sector	Requirements	Funds available		Funding gap	
		Humanitarian resources received in 2021	Resources available from 2020 (Carry-over)	\$	%
Health*	1,660,976	0	4,141,761	0	0%
Nutrition	3,239,024	681,000	252,239	2,305,785	71%
Child Protection	1,596,000	373,148	0	1,222,852	77%
Education	1,078,000	0	6,970	1,071,030	99%
WASH	3,500,000	596,735	969,233	1,934,032	55%
Social Protection	1,660,000	0	0	1,660,000	100%
Total	12,734,000	1,650,884	5,370,203	8,193,699	64%

*Resources available from 2020 (Carry-over) are for on-going health activities initiated in 2020 which were not originally planned as part of the 2021 HAC Appeal. As such, even though carry-over funding from 2020 exceeds 2021 requirements, planned activities under the 2021 HAC Appeal remain unfunded. Funding gaps are capped at 0.