



Josephine Sogbeh (32 years), a health care worker from Koima Health Facility in Kono district is now fully vaccinated. She received her second shot of the COVID-19 vaccine at Koidu Government Hospital @UNICEF/Sierra Leone/2021/Mutseyekwa

Sierra Leone

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 3

Situation in Numbers

3,300,000 children in need of humanitarian assistance

4,800,000 people in need*

Reporting Period: **1 July to 30 September 2021**

Highlights

A third wave of COVID-19 was in circulation from mid-June 2021 to 20 August 2021. As of 30 September, a cumulative total of 6,394 cases of COVID-19 has been confirmed with 121 deaths in the country.

A total of 991,490 COVID-19 vaccine doses were received in-country, including 456,690 doses under COVAX. First dose coverage (≥18 years old) is at 8.09 per cent (346,635).

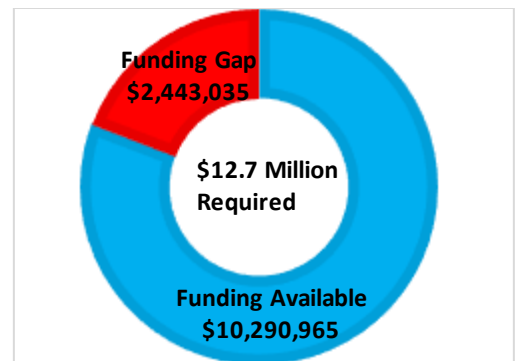
Over 1.6 million children under five years of age were vaccinated with nOPV2 during the second round of polio campaign (2-5 July 2021), and cumulative total (Jan-July 2021) of 25,462 children under 5 with SAM were admitted for treatment.

Food insecurity is rising, with MAM and SAM rates at 11 and 6 per cent respectively out of the 9,336 children screened with MUAC. This is higher than the rates of 8 and 3 per cent respectively in Q3 of 2020.

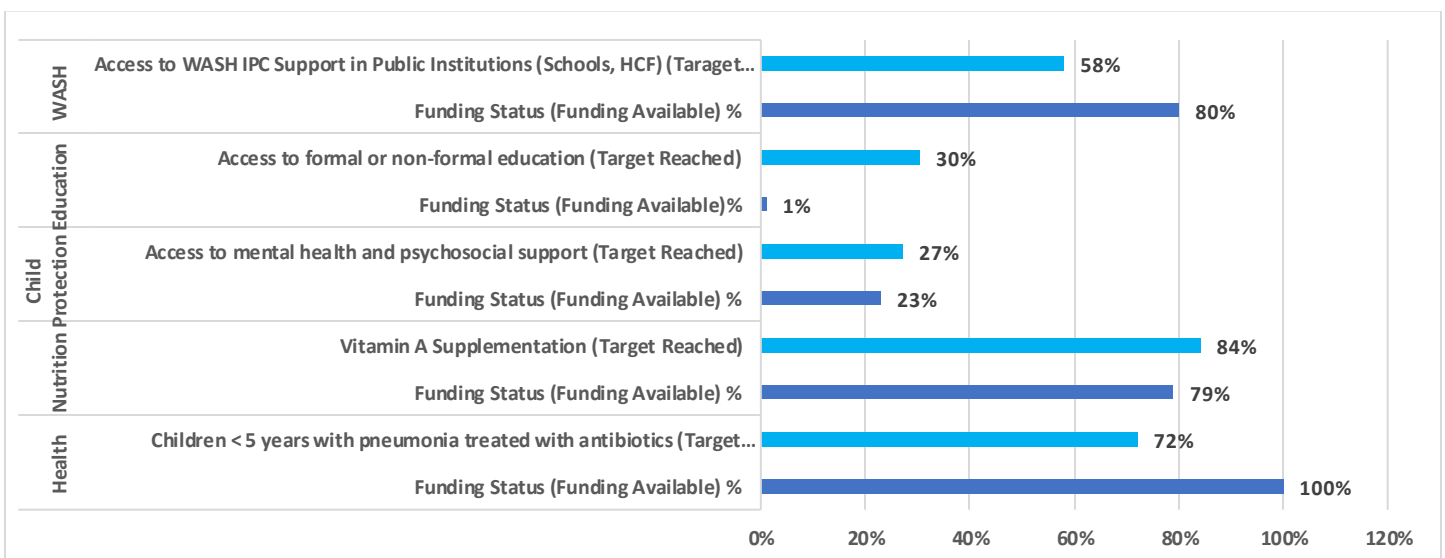
A total of 3,103 children and 674 adults received Psychological First Aid (PFA) in the context of COVID-19.

UNICEF Appeal 2021

US\$ 12.7 million



UNICEF's Response and Funding Status



*Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census, December 2016; and WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for WASH 2019

Funding Overview and Partnerships

During the reporting period, UNICEF received USD 3.2 million from GAVI The Vaccine Alliance, the Government of Japan, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for COVID-19 vaccine deployment support. This is in addition to the ongoing financial and in-kind support from the World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, the United Kingdom Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Government of Iceland, the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the African Development Bank, Global Partnership for Education, pooled Global Thematic Humanitarian Funds and UNOCHA (CERF), the Belgian Committee for UNICEF, the French Committee, and other partners for the humanitarian response in Sierra Leone. UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to all public and private donors for the contributions received. A funding gap of 19% however remains.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

As of 30 September 2021, there were cumulative total of 6,394 confirmed COVID-19 cases out of 235,596 tests performed, 121 deaths and 4,390 recoveries in Sierra Leone. A total of 346,635 persons have been reached with the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine (59.8% males, 40.2% females) and 81,216 with the second dose. The first dose coverage among the target population (≥ 18 years old) is 8.09% and a total of 28,141 (62.5%) health workers have received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

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. On 20 August 2021, the third wave was declared over.

While the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak in Guinea was declared over mid-June 2021, on 6 August 2021, the Ministry of Health of Guinea informed a confirmed case of Marburg virus disease (MVD) in Guéckédou Prefecture, Nzérékoré Region, south-western Guinea, close to Sierra Leone border. This new alert led the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) and partners in Sierra Leone to continue some key emergency preparedness and readiness activities undertaken for EVD.

During the reporting period, UNICEF continued to support the GoSL in actively pursuing preparedness measures to address the threat of EVD and MVD spillover to Sierra Leone while simultaneously preventing and addressing fire outbreaks, responding to COVID-19, and rolling out a polio campaign. UNICEF Sierra Leone is also supporting the COVID-19 vaccine deployment in the country, with the total 991,490 doses received, including 456,690 doses delivered under COVAX, as of 30 September 2021.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Health



UNICEF is working across all health centres to support continuity of EPI services, while also responding to COVID-19. © UNICEF Sierra Leone /2021/Ishmael Bull

In response to the circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) outbreak, over 1.6 million children under five years of age were vaccinated with nOPV2 during the second round of polio campaign from 2-5

July 2021. This was followed by a mop-up Round 3 campaign reaching 625,934 children in the three low performing districts of Western Area Urban, Western Area Rural and Tonkolili from 27-30 August 2021.

Following the third wave of COVID-19 pandemic in Sierra Leone from June to July 2021, UNICEF intensified its support to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) in enhancing oxygen supply capacity and accelerating the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

With technical and secretariat support from UNICEF, MoHS established an oxygen Technical Working Group (TWG), which completed partner mapping, administered oxygen planning tool, estimated the oxygen demand and identified the gaps based on the current supply capacity. The UNICEF biomedical engineer consultant further assisted in developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for maintenance of oxygen plants and technical specification for cylinders to facilitate standardized procurement. Meanwhile, three oxygen plants which UNICEF procured with a financial contribution from the Government of the United Kingdom and Islamic Development Bank arrived in the country, and the site preparation has been completed.

UNICEF continued to support the MoHS in COVID-19 vaccine deployment, particularly in supply chain management and risk communication. As of 30 September 2021, the country received 991,490 doses of vaccines through COVAX facility and African Union (AU)/AVAT facility as well as bilateral donation from AU and China. To accommodate the additional demand for vaccine storage facilities, with funding from Gavi, USAID, JICA and UNICEF internal resources, UNICEF procured a walk-in cold room, Ultra-Low Temperature (ULT) freezer, and 22 sets of TCW 4000 solar direct drive (SDD) refrigerators for installation at central and district levels, as well as nearly 200 SDD refrigerators for health facilities.

Nutrition

Out of the 9,336 children screened in communities during the reporting period, moderate and severe acute malnutrition (MAM and SAM) rates were 11 and 6 per cent respectively, slightly higher than 8 and 3 per cent in Q3 of 2020. This is possibly due to the rising food insecurity. In July 2021, 4,232 severely malnourished children (2,083 boys and 2,149 girls) were admitted for integrated management of acute malnutrition (IMAM) programme. Admission of 25,462 SAM children (12,353 boys and 13,109 girls) from January to July 2021 represents a 2.8 per cent increase in admission from the same period last year (24,778 cases).

Out of the total 25,462 SAM children enrolled, 21,638 children were discharged with 97.8 per cent cure rate (21,164 cases), meeting the SPHERE standards. With financial support from the Government of Japan, the United Kingdom and United States Fund for UNICEF in 2021, UNICEF Sierra Leone procured nutrition therapeutic supplies sufficient to rehabilitate 37,570 SAM children until mid-year of 2022.

Through collaborative work between UNICEF Sierra Leone, MoHS and Helen Keller International with support from Global Affairs Canada to improve under-five vitamin A coverage, eight per cent of children aged 6 – 59 months nationwide (104,442 out of 1,302,767 children) received vitamin A supplements through routine services in July and August 2021.

From July to September 2021, the National Nutrition Survey 2021 using the Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) methodology was conducted by MoHS with support from UNICEF and the Government of Japan. The survey assesses the current nutrition status of children, adolescents, and women of reproductive age in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak and worsening food security. In the absence of reliable nutrition surveillance system in the country to provide real-time data, the survey is expected to provide critical information source for evidence-based planning of humanitarian nutrition response.

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 3,103 children (1,551 boys, 1,552 girls) and 674 adults (324 males, 350 females) received Psychological First Aid (PFA) in the context of COVID-19. Beneficiaries included COVID-19-infected persons as well as children whose household or immediate community members were quarantined. Children, especially those under the age of 15, in communities where vaccination was administered also received PSS.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Welfare and civil society partners to conduct radio programme discussions in 16 districts to disseminate information on gender-based violence (GBV), with an estimated reach of 160,000 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 48 cases of rape, sexual assault and other forms of violence against women and children, as well as incidents of child abuse.

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.

Following a fire disaster incident in March 2021 at Susan's Bay, the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) reported that 700 school children from 80 schools (primary, junior secondary and senior secondary) were affected by the disaster. With support from UNICEF, the MBSSE commenced distribution of teaching and learning materials in July 2021 to individual children and host schools (recreation kits, school in a box, uniforms, school bags, shoes, and underwear) targeting 700 school going children. Fifty ECD kits were also prepositioned after the MBSEE directed that the distribution should stop until September 2021. To date, the MBSSE reported that 678 children have received supplies of teaching and learning materials, uniforms and other items. The distributed items are previously funded items that were in the UNICEF warehouse. Also, 170 teachers from 80 schools benefited from PSS training to provide counselling services to the affected children and parents.



Young Foday Conteh, pictured at Sawulia Community, Bombali District. Sawulia is one of 32 communities, where new ECD classrooms were recently commissioned.

© UNICEF Sierra Leone /2021/Mutseyekwa

UNICEF in partnership with Save The Children developed a draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Education Pillar and a Work Plan which is under review. The TOR and Work plan will be forwarded to the MBSSE and to education stakeholders for validation and approval. UNICEF provided technical support on global best practices for developing an Education Sector Ebola Preparedness and Response Plan following the resurgence of Ebola cases in neighbouring Guinea. The draft plan replicates existing COVID-19 strategies and response framework to ensure a safe and responsible operation of schools and learning continuity.

WASH



Children celebrating the arrival of clean water supply in their community, Levuma, Kenema District, Sierra Leone
© LWI Sierra Leone/2021/Rose Blake

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, and Ministry of Water Resources, UNICEF has ensured the provision of water supply and improved sanitation services in 45 healthcare facilities (11 Government Hospitals and 34 Periphery Health Units (PHUs)) that are designated as COVID-19 treatment centres through the construction of solar powered boreholes, flush latrines, showers, laundry rooms and waste management units that include incinerators, placenta pits, sharps and ash pits. During the reporting period, an additional three PHUs were provided with WASH services to reach the cumulative total of 45 healthcare facilities. Water supply in PHUs were also extended to host communities. During reporting period, additional three host communities with an estimated population of 2,498 (men, women, and children) were connected to water supply systems through their PHUs, making a cumulative total of 28,310 people.

UNICEF supported the training of healthcare workers on standard and EVD infection prevention and control measures reaching 50 PHUs across five priority border districts. Forty additional health workers were trained during the reporting period, making a cumulative total of 215 healthcare workers trained. Procurement of WASH IPC materials for fifty PHUs is in progress.

Social Protection

Preparations have been ongoing for the second round of payments under the COVID-19 Social Safety Net (SSN) programme to be initiated in October, while planning is still ongoing for enrolment of the second batch of beneficiaries under the programme. A registration exercise will be undertaken to add People with Disabilities to the national social protection registry as target beneficiaries of the SSN programme. Technical support has been received from UNICEF HQ to finalize the questionnaire, including appropriate questions for Children with Disabilities.

Payments, registration and enrolment activities will include 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 in collaboration with Public Information, Risk Communication and Social Mobilization (PIRCSM) Pillar, GOAL Sierra Leone and Restless Development, completed the training and deployment of 1,082 Community-Led Action (CLA) mobilizers in 8 border districts between July and September. Over 3,480 communities and 80,666 community members participated in the development of action plans on EVD prevention and compliance, reaching out 451,730 people with key messages on EVD prevention and control. The CLA approach was extended further to help scale-up community engagement for COVID-19 vaccination.

UNICEF also continued to support the district PIRCSM teams' supervision/coordination, as well as the production and airing of weekly radio discussion programmes on EVD, COVID-19 vaccination and essential health services.

About 190 representatives of risk communication and social mobilization teams, One Health platform, and CSO partners were oriented on the use of the rumour management platform, contributing to further adjust the reporting system for on-ground reporting. The rumour management platform/dashboard is connected to the national media monitoring team, hotline 117, and a network of district coordinators and focal points, with real-time visualization of rumours, misinformation and concerns trends reported.

UNICEF and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation supported the training and supervision of 3,800 social mobilizers and 530 town criers as well as media programmes, advocacy and multi-stakeholders' engagement meetings at national, district, chiefdom and community levels during the Polio Outbreak Response vaccination campaign from June to August. Social mobilisers and town criers drove community and caregiver awareness through 1,200 community engagements and 266,553 community dialogues which engaged over 850,000 people and 760,000 caregivers, contributing to the vaccination of 1.6 million children.

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).

Together with WHO and UNFPA, UNICEF advocates with the MoHS 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 Case Management Pillar within the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC).

As the main procurement agency for the GoSL for COVID-19 supplies as well as non-COVID-19 health and nutrition supplies, UNICEF is providing significant support to the Medical Logistics Pillar within the EOC for supply forecasting, technical advice for specification, coordination, and resource mobilisation.

UNICEF co-leads the COVID-19, Polio and EVD/MVD 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.

During the reporting period, the sectoral Pillars have been re-activated under the newly created National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) coordination structure for non-health related emergencies: UNICEF co-chairs the Food and Nutrition, WASH, Education, Psycho-social and Communication Pillars, which provide leadership and systematic coordination for timely response to emergencies in the country through operational planning, preparedness, response and monitoring mechanism.

UNICEF coordinates integrated GBV interventions across the MoGCA, MBSSE and the National Secretariat for Reduction of Teenage Pregnancy (NSRTP). Monthly child welfare coordination and emergency preparedness meetings are held in six districts.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

Human Interest Story:

Increased supplies of COVID-19 vaccines help in taking the vaccines closer to people By Tapuwa L. Mutseyekwa

30th September 2021 |Wellington, Sierra Leone - Charles Kamara (61 years) works as a security guard at Wellington Community Health Centre in the Western Area Rural District of Sierra Leone. His workstation

gives him the advantage of clearly seeing the movement of people arriving to receive health services and notice them upon their departure.

“But since August, I have been seeing people coming here daily. I have seen them being given their vaccines and going back home,” says Charles, as today he calmly takes his position to also receive his first dose of COVID-19 vaccine. “Seeing people being vaccinated and seeing that the vaccine does not make them sick, has made me realize how misguided I have been. I have now made my decision to also get vaccinated,” says Charles, as he elaborates how convinced he is about the safety of the vaccine.

After going through the vaccination and observation, Charles returns to his workstation, noting that he will look forward to receiving more people who will come to the health centre to also receive their vaccination. See full story [here](#).

*Charles Kamara receiving his first shot of the COVID-19 vaccine.
© UNICEF Sierra Leone/2021/Mutseyekwa*



External Media:

UNICEF Sierra Leone continued to support the Government of Sierra Leone with media and visibility work to announce the arrival of the [Johnson and Johnson vaccines](#) and the [Pfizer vaccines](#) in the country. Other visibility work was done to announce the [Government of Korea's donation](#) of 200,000 pieces of high-quality KF94 face masks to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation as well as the handover of medical supplies and equipment procured with [Islamic Development Bank \(IsDB\)](#) funds.

The Country Office contributed content to two online advocacy campaigns, namely the [“This is our future – Reimagining Education Financing in West and Central Africa”](#) campaign to promote innovative financing opportunities to tackle the learning crisis during COVID-19 and the [Call from Africa on COVID19 vaccines NOW](#) campaign which involved working with local social media influencers to join in the call for increased doses of vaccines to be made available to Africa.

Through the ad-credit facility initiated at global level and which has been extended to country offices, including Sierra Leone, there has been a huge boost in reaching audiences with social media posts related to COVID-19. For example, a [post to announce the surge vaccination campaign](#) led by Government reached almost 930, 000 followers and was liked by 81,000. Other posts with messages on [vaccine confidence building](#) and [handwashing](#) reached about 874,700 and 171,000 people respectively.

A series of visuals were also developed and posted on UNICEF's social media networks, including the following:

[Handwashing with soap under clean running water remains a key strategy to prevent #COVID19.](#)

[Jacob Kailie and his wife Innah Davide who reside in Moyamba district, southern #SierraLeone, are both fully vaccinated against #COVID19.](#)

[Message from musician, Fantacee, on the importance of taking vaccines.](#)

[Vaccines arrival at Lungi airport.](#)

[The Government of Japan contributes to respond to the impact of COVID -19 on child rights and resilience building in Sierra Leone.](#)

[Handover of medical supplies and equipment procured with Islamic Development Bank \(IsDB\) funds on behalf of the Government of #SierraLeone to contribute in strengthening the country's health delivery system during the current response to #COVID19.](#)

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

Next SitRep: 31 January 2022

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

Who to contact
for further
information:

Suleiman Braimoh
Representative
Sierra Leone
Tel: +23275986920
Email:
sbraimoh@unicef.org

Liv Elin Indreiten
Deputy Representative
(Programmes)
Sierra Leone
Tel: +23275123234
Email: lindreiten@unicef.org

Wilberforce Tengey
Deputy Representative
(Operations)
Sierra Leone
Tel: +23276100640
Email: wtengey@unicef.org

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	226,201
# of children aged 6 to 59 months vaccinated against measles		450,000	248,210
# children < 23 months who missed their scheduled vaccination (defaulters) traced and referred for vaccination at facility or outreach site		23,000	9,123
# 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	463,885
# children aged 6-59 months with SAM admitted for treatment		38,000	21,164 (total treated as cured) 25,462 (new admissions) (12,353 boys and 13,109 girls)
# children aged 6-59 months receiving vitamin A supplementation every 6 months		1,500,000	1,157,193 (Semester 1) 104,442 (Semester 2)
Child Protection	1,100,000		
# children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support		20,000	5,432 (total) 1,789 boys, 1,768 girls, 860 men, 1,015 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	219,485
Education	3,265,000		
# children receiving individual learning materials ¹		60,000	182,663
# 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	61,215
# 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	<i>Not yet quantifiable</i>
# 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)

¹ Education has a 99% funding gap. These learning materials were previously funded, kept in the UNICEF warehouse and distributed in this quarter and last quarter.

C4D/Community Engagement			
# people participating in engagement actions (for social and behavioural change)		350,000	850,000

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	392,493	4,141,761	-	0%
Nutrition	3,239,024	2,291,718	252,239	695,067	21%
Child Protection	1,596,000	371,373	-	1,224,627	77%
Education	1,078,000	-	6,790	1,071,210	99%
WASH	3,500,000	1,828,956	969,233	701,811	20%
Social Protection	1,660,000	36,401	-	1,623,599	98%
Total	12,734,000	4,920,942	5,370,023	2,443,035	19%

*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.