Highlights

- Upsurge in the number of confirmed cases: 497 new cases for a total of 803; more than double as last Friday;
- Sex ratio (M / F) = 1.6, median age 39 years (0-81 years);
- 10 deaths (4 in the Centre and 6 in the Littoral), lethality 1.4%;
- Recovered cases increased from 10 to 48;
- 16 new health personnel infected in West Region for a total of 21 infected health personnel; on April 3rd the first health practitioner (Ear Nose Throat Specialist) died from COVID related complications, in Douala;
- 2 new regions affected (South and East) in addition to four (Centre, Littoral, West, South-West) out of ten regions in the country;
- April 4th: birth of a new-born from a Covid-19 positive mother, 19 years of age at the Yaoundé Central Hospital, the baby tested negative;
- April 4th: Launching a massive systematic screening campaign of suspected cases in Douala.
- April 9th: Seven additional prevention and control measures were enacted by the Head Government;

Situation Overview and Needs

As of April 8th, 803 confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been recorded in Cameroon. In the absence of movement restrictions, the transmission of the Coronavirus is now spreading rapidly across 6 out of the 10 regions: On April 8th, one case was declared in the East region. The case has been isolated alongside the 40 contacts traced back to his journey on a public bus who have been placed in quarantine; further investigations and testing are ongoing.

WHO CO and the Ministry of Public Health forecasted that in June, the number of confirmed cases will by far exceed the 10,000 threshold. However, the forecasted figures are still tentative and very much dependent on the effectiveness of the Government’s response, the leadership for which was recently moved up to the Office of the Prime Minister, an indication of a rise in the perceived severity of the crisis.

Government’s Response

On April 9th, The Government enacted a series of 7 measures to reinforce its response in addition to the 13 measures passed on March 17th, 2020. Starting April 13th: (i) face masks will be rendered mandatory in all public spaces. (ii) medication, protective masks, hydroalcoholic gel and testing will be produced locally; (iii) Specialized treatment centres will be established in regional headquarters to ensure continuity of health care in health facilities; (iv) scale-up in testing...
in all the regions and (v) sensitization in official and vernacular languages; (vii) sanctions to be applied to persons found in violation of these measures.

Upstream activities conducted this week in line with the aforementioned measures. A systematic screening campaign was launched on April 4th in Douala. Scale-up of testing is ongoing in all regions as the decentralization strategy moves forth; laboratories are already equipped with GeneXpert DX system for rapid testing.

Three new case management and quarantining sites have been identified: the Yaounde Military Stadium, the Center of Operations for Emergencies, and a former mall site with capacity of about 3000 beds all under rehabilitation and restructuring. Concurrently, only severe cases are being admitted in hospitals for treatment; the quarantining of mild and moderate positive cases is done out of hospital sites.

**Coordination and Partnerships**

*With the Government:*

- UNICEF is the lead on Risk Communications and Community Engagement (RCCE) at the national level in all platforms (Government, UN and key partners) and contributes to the coordination of RCCE planning and implementation at central and decentralized levels in partnership with the regional delegations of the MoH. In partnership with MoH, UNICEF revised the decentralization strategy for the following documents: COVID19 Frequently Asked Questions, Advice Messages to the General Public on COVID19, media spots on COVID19, Community health workers Training Guidance and the Terms of Reference of a Community health workers / COVID-19Mobilizer
- With MINCOM, UNICEF is developing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism using RCCE indicators (outreach, and community feedbacks); also with MoH on the engagement of community leaders including web influence indicators.
- With MoH-COUSP, documentation of good practices such as respect of hygiene measures and physical distancing ongoing.
- UNICEF is participating at the daily debriefing at the Center for Emergency Operations and at the RCCE coordination meeting with Department of Health Promotion every Tuesday at 10am in addition to weekly meetings with Government bodies held by the prime minister who coordinates the national response

**SUPPLIES**

- The HIV section has submitted a request for 2,500 COVID-19 test kits and is awaiting confirmation of supply availability from UNICEF Supply Division.
- In effort to improve availability of masks for the community workers UNICEF is currently working with local suppliers on design to enable local procurement of non-medical masks as a preventive support effort.
- Procurement for Education support is currently underway for a quantity of 15,000 school radio and 10,000 computer tablets.

**Summary Analysis of Preparedness and Response of UNICEF’s ACTIONS**

*Risk Communication and Community Engagement*

UNICEF’s support to the Government:

- Production of an animated infographic to better explain this pandemic to children and a flipchart (image box) for the larger public, supply of an additional 38 442 posters with specific messages on protection in English and French and 12 child protection messages
- Contracts were signed with 201 community radio stations identified by MINCOM throughout the territory for the broadcasting of preventive measures with 100 major radio stations for the broadcasting of interactive programs to collect and address populations’ complaints and feedback (strengthening Accountability to Affected Populations). Support to measures to integrate collection of community feedback into the Communities health workers, Peer Educators and volunteer’s activity package.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs, specific awareness campaigns were launched in the UNICEF’s four program priority regions (East, Adamawa, North and Far-North) through the 65 existing C4D community engagement platforms. Additionally, partners of the private sector (GICAM, UBA, ORANGE) were engaged for further awareness-raising actions. Their support will help strengthen the prevention system and help meet the needs of the most vulnerable population/special populations and refugees.
- 600 Peer Educators of the MNCH project were engaged in 35 health districts of East, Adamawa, North, Far-North and Centre regions, for awareness on COVID-19. The same applies for other programs such as Immunization, WASH, Child Protection, HIV and Education.
- Ongoing awareness campaign on various digital platforms, after digital engagement with influencers and production of short videos on the importance of wearing face masks.
- 150 religious leaders were engaged in 3 regions (Centre, West and Littoral) to address rumours in their communities.

**Child protection**
- Ongoing discussions with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Women Empowerment and Family as to define how UNICEF can support them in preventing the spread of Covid-19 and protecting children and women from violence, abuse and exploitation. Support provided to National Office for Birth Registration (BUNEC), as well as the Ministry of Justice to ensure communication on how to prevent the spread of the epidemic and to provide hygiene and sanitation supplies and equipment.
- Finalization of a guidance note for child protection during COVID-19, including risk mitigation measures for partners to implement while delivering their services, drafted by the CP Area of Responsibility for NWSW response.
- Guidance notes on child protection case management and alternative care during the Covid-19 pandemic under development, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs.
- HPDs signed to provide 36 alternative care institutions in Yaounde and 16 in Douala with hygiene kits as well as information and sensitization material about measures to prevent transmission of Covid-19.
- HPD signed to provide prisons of Yaounde, Douala and Bafoussam with hygiene kits as well as information and sensitization material about measures to prevent transmission of Covid-19.
- Discussions with Ministry of Health, Cameroonian Red Cross and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent on the setting up of a psychosocial first aid mechanisms in urban settings and at community level.
- Community-based mobile information and sensitization took place on COVID-19 and prevention measures in the Far-North using motorcycles and megaphones to continuously broadcast messages in 9 vernacular languages.

**Nutrition**
- Key messages on Infant and Young Child Feeding in Covid-19 context are being developed and will be validated by the 10th of April
- Pre-positioning of supplies is ongoing to avoid disruption in the services
- Ensuring other priority activities in nutrition sector (Home based food fortification, Supplementation in Vit A, IYCF…) are implemented and adapted to respect restriction and mitigation measures
- Supporting health staff and community health workers intervening in nutrition programme with capacity building on care during Covid-19 context and protection equipment.

**Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) and WASH**
- With the support of UNICEF, 700 trained Red Cross volunteers sensitized a total of 351,286 people including 3,934 people with disabilities on prevention, case identification and response to COVID-19 in Douala, Yaounde and Bafoussam. The 680 handwashing points installed in the three towns are being used by population.

**Education**
- Under the aegis of the Local Education Group, a national education sector strategy has been designed around several scenarios which include total confinement and the possible non-reopening of schools in September.
- The development and use of alternative learning platforms such as online and offline platforms, radio, TV and paper support will focus in the next 2 months on the children who are due to take their end of year exams. Materials are under development under the ministerial leadership with support from UNESCO, UNICEF and other sectoral partners. The Ministry of Basic Education has launched a Radio Education Programme on national radio for 5th grade students who are due to take the exams. The strategy includes a strong protection component, where MHPSS and risk prevention are integrated in the formal and non-formal education provision.

**Health**
- Discussions between MoH department of family Health, WHO, UNFPA on level of preparedness of health facilities for case management of COVID-19 positive pregnant women.

**FURTHER STEPS**
- Develop with WHO and other key partners guidelines on an operational plan,
- Develop a joint concept note to mobilize funds to disseminate the guidelines and support some targeted health facilities,
- Discussions between Health and Child protection on how to ensure PSS to pregnant women, COVID positive mothers caring for their newborns.

**Funding Overview**
As of April 8th, UNICEF has received $450,000 for COVID response from the UK DFID. Discussions are presently taking place with OFDA, CERF Secretariat, ECHO and KFW (Germany) towards new contributions and/or reprogramming of existing grants.
### Indicative needs

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**Next SitRep:** Friday 17th April 2020


**Annex – Cumulative number of positive COVID-19 cases per region April 08th 2020**

**Who to contact for further information:**

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