The first patient with COVID-19 was diagnosed in Georgia on 26 February 2020. Despite early actions of the Government, the number of confirmed and suspected cases continued to grow. The Government declared a state of emergency on 21 March, closing borders and airports, restricting movement inside the country, banning mass gatherings and maintaining closure of all schools, kindergartens and universities. The state of emergency ended on 23 May, however, several restrictions remain in place. The Parliament of Georgia passed a bill, which allows the Government to impose movement, labor, migration, economic and other restrictions without the declaration of a state of emergency. Travel restrictions remain in place until the end of August.

To date, Abkhazia, Georgia, reported 156 cases, with 58 recoveries and three deaths. A state of emergency was put in place on 28 March and was lifted as of 21 April. On 1 July, kindergartens reopened, and the most social restrictions eased. The border with Russia opened on

**Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs**

The signing of MoC between UNICEF and Czech Development Agency aiming at strengthening Primary Health Care.

**14 August 2020**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- A meeting was held with the Minister of Education of Adjara to discuss collaboration and support for the safe re-opening of schools and kindergartens, as well as initiatives aimed at improving mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of adolescents, amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between UNICEF and Czech Development Agency. The goal of this cooperation is to support the strengthening of primary health care system, especially in emergencies.
- UNICEF visited Club Synergy, a psychosocial service center, to discuss the joint programme, the situation of drug abuse and gambling addiction among adolescents, as well as psychosocial support needs, given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- UNICEF distributed PPE to 39 rural health centers in three districts of Abkhazia and to the Central Maternity under the Republican Hospital of Abkhazia.
- In close collaboration with NCDC, UNICEF is developing child-friendly posters on COVID-19 preventive measures for preschools and primary schools.
- The Administration of All Muslims of Georgia disseminated UNICEF provided educational materials on COVID-19 to their community members. The materials included seven short videos, ten social media posters and three graphic animations. These materials give additional information to community members on COVID-19 safety measures in their local language.
- UNICEF Representative visited the remote area of Khulo, Adjara, inaugurated a branch of Legal Aid Service, and met with the Chairperson of the Kindergartens Union.
- The UNICEF-supported child hotline “111” operationalized support for adolescents on substance abuse and online gambling, providing 10 primary crisis interventions in the period of 7-13 August.

### SITUATION IN NUMBERS

- **1,306** Confirmed cases
- **1,085** Recovered cases
- **17** Confirmed deaths
- **98** Confirmed cases among children (under 18 years)
- **7,597** Quarantined
- **UNICEF funding needs** US$ 4,415,399
- **UNICEF funding gap** US$ 1,841,399 (42%)
Humanitarian Strategy

UNICEF continues to work closely with the Government, WHO and other United Nations and humanitarian partners to provide technical guidance and support. In line with WHO’s COVID-19 Strategic Response Plan, UNICEF is focusing on limiting human-to-human transmission and mitigating the impact of the outbreak on the health system and communities.

UNICEF’s mix of response and preparedness activities include:

1. Facilitating risk communication as well as learning, play, and positive parenting communications;
2. Provisioning critical hygiene and medical supplies for healthcare;
3. Ensuring children, pregnant, and lactating women are supported with adequate healthcare despite the outbreak; and
4. Mitigating secondary effects of the outbreak by facilitating continued access to education, child protection needs, including prevention of violence against children, and advocating for continued access to social protection programmes.

UNICEF’s Response

UNICEF is supporting COVID-19 coordination mechanisms nationally, and in regions, with technical expertise, planning, and communications, including participating in UN coordination groups for health procurement and socio-economic/early recovery and chairing the social protection and education group.

Communication for Social Change (C4SC) and External Communications

- Ten social media posters, three graphic animations, and seven short videos of Muslim religious leaders speaking about COVID-19, produced by UNICEF as part of NCDC risk communication strategic plan activities, were disseminated by the Administration of All Muslims of Georgia among the community.
- TV programs for parents, televised in collaboration with the Georgian Public Broadcasting, which aired in the period of May-June, were adapted and translated in Azerbaijani and Armenian languages. To date, 40 TV programs aired on Marneuli and Parvana TV stations to support parents in childcare and home-based learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, including information for parents of children with disabilities.
- UNICEF’s media campaign, *Voices of Children*, continues. A series of videos are being published where children talk about how COVID-19 changed their lives and their new normal.

Health, Nutrition and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between UNICEF and Czech Development Agency. The goal of this cooperation is to support the strengthening of primary health care, especially in emergencies.
- UNICEF’s virtual antenatal care programme is expanding, increasing its reach to 12,895 pregnant women, of which 31% participated in virtual medical consultations. Registered pregnant women in Marneuli, Gardabani, Vani, and Tbilisi municipalities, as well as in Adjara and Guria regions are fully covered. Currently, the work is ongoing in the Imereti region.
UNICEF distributed PPE to 39 rural health centers in three districts of the Abkhazia region to facilitate the delivery of primary health care services.

PPE and sanitizers were provided to Central Maternity of the Republican Hospital of the Abkhazia region.

**Adolescents/youth**

The UNICEF-supported child hotline “111” operationalized support for adolescents on substance abuse and online gambling, providing 10 primary crisis interventions in the period of 7-13 August, out of which nine were related to gambling, and one was related to drug use. Currently, six individuals are undertaking counseling sessions with the psychologist at the crisis center.

UNICEF visited Club Synergy, a psychosocial service center, to discuss the joint programme, the situation of drug abuse and gambling addiction among adolescents, as well as psychosocial support needs given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The UNICEF Representative gave a speech on the Regional Youth Forum in Adjara, organized by the Youth Agency of Georgia, aiming at ensuring the participation of multiple stakeholders in the development of the National Youth Strategy 2025. The regional forum serves as a platform for structured dialogue to ensure that young people's voices are heard by policymakers in the strategy-shaping process.

UNICEF partner NGO Helping Hand started the second phase of training for volunteers with 70 newly selected volunteers attending the sessions which included the following topics: Volunteering and Coronavirus Support, and Promotion of Youth Volunteer Roles Related to the COVID-19 Response.

A webinar was organized on Mobilizing Youth Volunteers with 47 participants attended the session and the recorded session reached 5,500 people on social media.

During the reporting period, youth volunteers contributed more than 250 hours to peer learning, online training, workshops, film screening, organized activities for older people, making new friends and breaking out of the cycle of social isolation and loneliness, and more.

The UNICEF Representative held a coaching session for young people who were the members of Facebook group, created by UNICEF and the Georgian Institute for Debate and Education. This group served as a meeting space and an entertainment/education resource during the pandemic.

A new group of 50 adolescents from various regions of Georgia were engaged by Kant’s Academy in interactive zoom sessions covering the following topics: types of leadership, planning and implementing business companies, stress management, and relationships between parents and children.

An online survey to explore adolescents’ wellbeing, run by UNICEF partner Kant’s Academy, concluded with a total of 1,090 participants. The results are being analyzed and will be published by the end of August 2020.

UNICEF’s partner, Global Initiative in Psychiatry (GIP), continues a series of online webinars for adolescents and their parents, covering the following topic during the reporting period: Anger – enemy or friend? by Natia Kuchukidze, psychotherapists, Master of Addiction Studies, reaching 3,200 views.

**Child Protection**

In partnership with the Parliament and State Care Agency, the UNICEF-supported child hotline “111” continues to provide assistance to children and their families, supporting 672 cases to date, of which 592 already received assistance and were closed accordingly.

A Facebook page to support parents of children with disabilities, run by UNICEF’s partner organization, MAC Georgia, continues to provide practical information, one-to-one counseling with specialists, and chats for parents and caregivers.

Through group and individual sessions, UNICEF partner - Children of Georgia provided online psychological support to 228 children and 155 caregivers in small group homes and foster care, in all regions of Georgia. During the reporting period, the following topics were covered: distresses caused during and by COVID-19-related
restrictions/isolation; emotional state of children; altered daily routine contributing anxiety; conflict management; violence; challenging behavior. Psychological assistance was given to a 9-year old child who was left alone in the quarantine zone when his relatives got hospitalized.

**Education**

- A meeting was held with the Minister of Education of Adjara to discuss collaboration and support for the safe re-opening of schools and kindergartens as well as initiatives aimed at improving mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of adolescents, amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In close collaboration with NCDC, UNICEF is developing child-friendly posters on COVID-19 preventive measures for preschools and primary schools.
- Interactive TV programmes for parents of young children, developed through the collaboration between UNICEF and Public Broadcasting TV Channel, as well as early child development activities, tips for parents, and picture book reading videos developed through the collaboration between UNICEF and Education Coalition for All, continue to be shared on various web-platforms, including the educational resource web-page of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia.
- Brochures for parents on early childhood development have been prepared for three age groups: infants (birth to 1), toddlers (1 to 3) and preschoolers (3 to 6). Brochures include parenting tips and activities to promote holistic development. Printed brochures will be delivered to the State Care Agency for distribution to vulnerable families with young children.
- The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport established a multi-disciplinary team to work on the safe re-opening of schools. UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Education, EMIS\(^1\) and Georgian Coalition for Education for All (EFA) with the development of essential teaching and learning resources for online education of children during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- With UNICEF support and in partnership with CK-12 international foundation, Education for All Coalition is translating and adapting interactive and online teaching and learning resources for the use by school students and teachers of Georgia during the pandemic and beyond.

**Social Protection**

- Simulations of cash transfer programmes for the alleviation of the COVID-19 impact are complete, and its findings, together with the social protection system readiness assessment report, were shared with the National Security Council, Administration of the Government of Georgia, PM Office, and Deputy Ministers for MolDPOTLHSA\(^2\) for further review and actions. The Government requested a second wave of simulations and provided scenarios to assess the potential impact of COVID-19.

**Partnerships**

**UNICEF**

- is collaborating with the Prime Minister’s Office to provide needs-based support to the most vulnerable children and their families, including national minorities, and children with disabilities.
- has developed and/or strengthened partnerships with public broadcasting and other TV and online channels to further amplify risk communication messages and enhance home-based learning and education.
- continues working with religious leaders to develop and implement COVID-19 response plans.

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1. Education Management Information System
2. Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia
continues its partnerships with the Education for All Coalition, an alliance of CSOs working on education, and a network of organizations working with children with disabilities and their families, contributing to distance learning efforts of the Government and provide needed support to families with children with disabilities.

enhanced its partnership with the National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC) on responding to COVID-19 pandemic through a Memorandum of Cooperation.

partnered with UNHCR to improve the access to safe water and adequate hygiene for children and teachers in six schools in the Abkhazia region.

is partnering with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to reach selected schools in the Abkhazia region with hygiene materials.

signed a cooperation agreement with the Czech Development Agency with the goal of strengthening primary health care, especially in emergencies, through a joint programme between UNICEF Georgia and Caritas Georgia.

is discussing with the National Security Council areas for future cooperation.

wishes to express its gratitude to donors supporting its response to COVID-19: Bulgaria, Estonia, the European Union, Korea, Norway, SIDA, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, UKAid, and USAID.

### Results to Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>3,060</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>550</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in infection prevention and control (IPC)</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support</td>
<td>5,350</td>
<td>7,346</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Areas</th>
<th>Funding Needs</th>
<th>Funds Identified</th>
<th>Funding Gap</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of teaching and learning resources for distance learning</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>282,100</td>
<td>17,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of resources for parents for early learning and school readiness</td>
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<td><strong>Child Protection</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of resources to prevent violence against children</td>
<td>514,000</td>
<td>260,650</td>
<td>253,350</td>
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<td>Support to service providers within the child protection and justice systems to respond to COVID-19 and enable continued service provision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support continued programming for children with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support social workers in Abkhazia to provide services to vulnerable families</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Health, Nutrition and WASH</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Procure essential supplies and equipment including COVID-19 test kits</td>
<td>3,001,399</td>
<td>1,589,300</td>
<td>1,412,099</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support telemedicine to enable access to critical health services</td>
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<td>Training of health professionals through telehealth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of regulations and standards in all health specialty areas for pregnant women, mothers, newborns and children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving access to WASH in schools in Abkhazia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adolescent mental health and wellbeing</td>
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<td><strong>Social Policy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct shock-responsive feasibility assessment of the social protection system</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>241,950</td>
<td>158,050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct assessment of vulnerable and at-risk groups of children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct a Real Time Monitoring survey</td>
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Risk Communication and Community Engagement
- Carry out a risk communication campaign
- Carry out #LearningatHome campaign to help parents in care and early learning opportunities of their children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Communication and Community Engagement</th>
<th>200,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>4,415,399</td>
<td>2,574,000</td>
<td>1,841,399</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Fundraising efforts ongoing to bridge the funding gap)</td>
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Next Situation Report: 21 August 2020

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