On 26 February 2020, the first case of COVID-19 was identified in Georgia. In the following days, several more cases emerged, which prompted the Government to institute the first phase of restrictions on land and air movement and closure of schools, effective 2 March. The Government mobilized hospitals for confirmed cases of COVID-19, as well as quarantine spaces for suspected cases in different regions of Georgia. Despite the early actions of the Government, the number of confirmed and suspected cases continued to grow, triggering the Government to declare a state of emergency on 21 March – closing all borders and airports, restricting movement inside the country, banning mass gatherings and maintaining closure of all schools, kindergartens, and universities. Community spread was detected, spurring the Government to introduce a curfew, halt movement of public transport, and introduce checkpoints on city crossings administered by police and military units. The State of Emergency was extended until 22 May, however, a gradual lifting of restrictions is planned. Movement of cars within cities is now permitted and as of 11 May, entry and exit from Tbilisi will be allowed.

The first case of COVID-19 was identified in Abkhazia, Georgia on 30 March. To date, there have been three COVID-19 cases, and one death...
was recorded. A state of emergency was put in place in Abkhazia from 28 March and it was lifted as of 21 April. Despite this, restrictions on movement remain in place and the administrative boundary line and the border with Russia remains closed.

**Humanitarian Strategy**

UNICEF continues to work closely with the Government, WHO and other United Nations and humanitarian team 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;
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**

- The social media campaign #LearningAtHome reached 208,067 people and engaged 17,470 people. The challenge was supported by online media platform On.ge.
- UNICEF partnered with Sulakauri Publishing to translate an illustrated book for children on COVID-19 in 3 languages, Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani, which was shared on UNICEF’s platforms and networks.
- The second wave of results from the Behavioral Insight Study, carried out by UNICEF and WHO, became available. Respondents exhibited high knowledge, adequate attitudes, and trust about the COVID-19 outbreak and response activities.
- Two partnerships have been established with youth organizations to enhance the engagement of young people in the COVID-19 response. More than 15 young people participated in an online focus group to develop a concept, name and goals of a youth-centered Facebook group. The planned activities of the established partnerships include: youth debates, webinars, quizzes, competitions, and multimedia production.
- UNICEF developed a number of blogs and stories highlighting experiences of children and young people during the COVID-19 crisis. The stories have been amplified through UNICEF social media channels.
- During the reporting week, UNICEF reached approximately 1,413,000 people and engaged 55,000 people in discussions about COVID-19 through web and social media channels.
Health, Nutrition and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- UNICEF delivered Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to the First University Clinic in Tbilisi and 4 health clinics in the Adjara region, which included a total of 1,000 liters of hand sanitizer, 50,000 gloves, 12,000 surgical masks, and 3,800 face-shields.
- UNICEF is working with the State Medical University to establish a telemedicine center at the University Hospital to enable remote referrals for antenatal and pediatric care.
- UNICEF continues to support local stakeholders in Abkhazia in developing rapid preparedness and response plans covering risk and awareness communication messages, patient routing, contact tracing, immunization-related interventions, and guidelines for pregnant women and breastfeeding during the COVID-19.
- Two videos were developed on COVID-19-related risk communication for Abkhazia.
- 400 masks provided by the Korean Embassy were delivered to Abkhazia.

Child Protection

- The COVID-19 hotline “111”, continues to provide assistance to children and their families on health, social, educational, and emotional issues related to the crisis situation. The hotline is operated by the State Care Agency and is monitored by the Parliament of Georgia. Since the launch on 24 April, 243 cases were received, out of which 97 cases received assistance and were closed accordingly.
- UNICEF partner, Children of Georgia, provided psychological support to a total of 151 children and 88 caregivers in alternative care – foster and reintegrated families, Kojori institution, and small group homes in Tbilisi, Imereti, Adjara, Shida-Kartli, Kakheti, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Guria.
- New episodes were launched of a specialized TV programme for parents of children with disabilities, in a partnership with Georgian Public Broadcaster, State Care Agency, and MAC Georgia. Twice a week, experts continue to share their knowledge on the main educational channel. The programme reached 400,000 viewers.
- The Facebook page to support parents of children with disabilities on COVID-19-related prevention and care, as well as relevant guidance on academic, emotional and behavioral support for children with disabilities and their families, has gained more than 1,500 followers and its post has reached an estimated 57,976 people.
- With UNICEF technical assistance, the Ministry of Health adopted an ordinance for teleservice provision and transformation of services for children with disabilities and children at risk. Direct technical assistance was provided to service providers by UNICEF’s partner, MAC Georgia.
- UNICEF-trained social workers (30) and volunteers (130) in Abkhazia continue to identify vulnerable families and provide assistance in cooperation with the local stakeholders, including NGOs, private sector, local de facto authorities, and volunteers.

Education

- To support children with distance learning during COVID-19, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed on 5 May between UNICEF, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, the Georgian Coalition for Education for All, and Education Management Information System (EMIS), with support of UK Aid, to develop educational resources for both preschool and general education.
- UNICEF, together with UN Agencies and other development partners, is advocating with MoESCS for improved access to computers and internet for the most vulnerable children to enable equal participation into continued learning.
- UNICEF is developing communication materials to support the cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development of young children using various platforms.
- UNICEF continues to support the development of a brief teachers’ guide for organizing effective distant learning that considers the individual needs of children and their families.
- UNICEF, in partnership with the CSO Coalition Education for All and MoESCS, is developing teaching and learning resources for effective distance/online learning.
- UNICEF is developing an education platform to support distance learning in Abkhazia.

Social Protection

- UNICEF is completing a Shock Responsive Social Protection Feasibility Assessment.
- UNICEF is conducting the assessment of the potential impact of the COVID-19 on the most vulnerable groups, with special attention given to children.
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.

• UNICEF entered into a partnership with public broadcasting and other TV and online channels to further amplify risk communication messages and enhance home-based learning and education.

• Partnerships with religious leaders enabled the development of COVID-19 response plans with the Patriarchate of the Orthodox Church of Georgia and the Administration of All Muslims of Georgia.

• 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, will contribute to distance learning efforts of the Government and provide needed support to families with CWDs.

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

• UNICEF and UNHCR are partnering to improve the access of children and teachers to safe water and adequate hygiene in six schools in Abkhazia.

• UNICEF wishes to express its gratitude to donors supporting its response to COVID-19: Estonia, the European Union, Korea, Norway, SIDA, UKAid and USAID.

Human Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF Personnel in Georgia CO</th>
<th>Tbilisi</th>
<th>Abkhazia</th>
<th>Total Staff Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Staff</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Staff</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Staff</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
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</table>

Results to Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>1,413,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>access to services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>1,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning</td>
<td>592,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support</td>
<td>4,150</td>
<td>1,315</td>
</tr>
</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>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of teaching and learning resources for distance learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of resources for parents for early learning and school readiness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of resources to prevent violence against children</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to service providers within the child protection and justice systems to respond to COVID-19 and enable continued service provision</td>
<td>514,000</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>459,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support continued programming for children with disabilities</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Support social workers in Abkhazia to provide services to vulnerable families

### Health, Nutrition and WASH
- Procure essential supplies and equipment including COVID-19 test kits
- Support telemedicine to enable access to critical health services
- Training of health professionals through telehealth
- Development of regulations and standards in all health specialty areas for pregnant women, mothers, newborns and children
- Improving access to WASH in schools in Abkhazia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health, Nutrition and WASH</th>
<th>3,101,399</th>
<th>152,050</th>
<th>2,949,349</th>
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</thead>
</table>

### Social Policy
- Conduct shock-responsive feasibility assessment of the social protection system
- Conduct assessment of vulnerable and at-risk groups of children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Policy</th>
<th>400,000</th>
<th>41,950</th>
<th>358,050</th>
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</table>

### 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>
<th>70,000</th>
<th>130,000</th>
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</table>

### Grand Total
(Fundraising efforts ongoing to bridge the funding gap)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grand Total</th>
<th>4,415,399</th>
<th>449,000</th>
<th>3,966,399</th>
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</table>

**Next Situation Report:** 15 May 2020

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