Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

Ghana retains its position as the country with the second highest number of cases in the West and Central African region after Nigeria, and third in the number of cumulative cases in the WHO Africa region, following South Africa and Nigeria. Between 16th and 30th June, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Ghana has increased by 31 percent, from 11,964 to 17,351. The number of people who are reported to have died from the disease has more than doubled, from 54 to 112.

On Monday 29 June, 532,000 Junior High School students and 218,000 teaching and non-teaching staff returned to school. This was the final batch to return in the first phase of re-opening of schools following the closures in March. The Government announced the implementation of measures to promote good hygiene and social distancing protocols within school. These include a COVID-19 sensitization programme for all head teachers and their teaching staff, the distribution of hygiene products - including veronica buckets, hand sanitisers, soaps and reusable masks – and abridged school hours.

In his address to the nation on 28th June, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Ghana emphasized the importance of maintaining good hygiene and social distancing protocols, and reminded the population of the need to wear a face mask when in public. President Akufo-Addo also announced that the incentive package for health workers will be extended by another three months. This means that health workers will pay no income tax from July to September.

In support of the Government of Ghana’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF has been coordinating with the United Nations Country Team, Development Partners, INGOs and civil society organizations, to protect children and their families from exposure to the virus and support the continuity of services.
UNICEF’s COVID-19 Response

Health

UNICEF continued to monitor the situation on the ground and strengthened the capacity of frontline health workers to deliver routine health services. An additional 306 health workers enhanced their skills during the reporting period and plans are underway to increase the number of people to be trained on COVID-19 case management and Infection Prevention and Control.

UNICEF continued to actively work with the technical working group and planning committee as the Ghana Health Service prepares to host the annual newborn stakeholders conference. Preparations are also underway for the resumption of polio outbreak response activities in the context of COVID-19. As part of the Ghana team of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), UNICEF and WHO supported the development of the comprehensive polio risk assessment, which was presented to the African Regional Rapid Response Team.

Nutrition

The Expanded Scaling up Nutrition Development Partners (SUN-DP) Group has finalized the inter-agency plan on the nutrition response to COVID-19. This plan will be used to guide government agencies and partners in the implementation of Nutrition preparedness and response until June 2021.

To safeguard and protect the already declining breastfeeding rates in the country, UNICEF in collaboration with WHO has supported the Ghana Health Service in the planning of a one-year campaign to improve breastfeeding and the quality of diets of young children. The campaign will begin in July, with the official launch occurring during the World Breastfeeding Week in August 2020.

Water Sanitation & Hygiene

UNICEF continues to support the Ministry of Sanitation and Water resources to scale up risk communication. In the last two weeks, more than 99,000 people living within targeted communities have been orientated on good hygiene practices by environmental health staff, with support from UNICEF.

The orientation of 370 environmental health officers in Obuasi, Greater Kumasi and Greater Accra metropolitan areas was completed, and rollout of enhanced inspection and community risk communication has started. In Oti Region, Volta Region and Central Region, 109 environmental health staff have been trained to implement COVID-19 hygiene programs in their districts.
An additional 300 Veronica Buckets have been procured and provided to the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources to support with improved hygiene in public places, mainly in areas where there are many cases of COVID-19. UNICEF is working with local authorities to deploy these facilities to public spaces, including public toilets, lorry parks, markets and other key areas where there are gaps to further reinforce risk communication and disinfection activities.

Communication and Community Engagement

With the support of UNICEF, three civil society organizations - Dawah Academy, Behasun and RISE Ghana - led 13 advocacy sessions on messages of COVID-19 prevention, spread and stigma in the five northern regions of Ghana (Savannah, Northern, North-East, Upper East and Upper West region). The meetings comprised 45 Imams, 39 Pastors, 57 Chiefs, 38 Queen Mothers and 62 Youth Leaders.

The CSO partners were also able to reach 155 communities with mobile van announcements and some community education, as well as hand washing demonstrations, while adhering to the social distancing and face mask wearing protocols. About 235,000 people benefited.

Another 8,650 people were reached in 14 markets of the Northern, Upper East and Central regions through the dissemination of information in the market with megaphones amidst handwashing and face mask wearing demonstrations. UNICEF and its partners also showed how to construct Tippy Taps in three markets of the Upper East Region.

The Agoo digital platform received 134,271 calls on COVID related topics from 13,760 people.

Young people shared their experiences on how they are coping through a recent U-Report poll: ‘Coping with the COVID-19 pandemic’. Most respondents noted that they have been most impacted mostly by the school closures (46%) and 12% of young respondents said they felt very anxious and worried about the future.

Around 46% of the respondents expressed that their most immediate need was cash assistance followed by education/learning support. While 29% of young people felt that the government and partners were doing their best, 40% expressed that more needed to be done. UNICEF continues to share important messages on precautionary measures for COVID-19 through social media channels, which included guidelines on entering the home.

To mark the Day of the African Child, UNICEF highlighted the importance of access to child-friendly justice as more children may be experiencing a surge in violence and abuse due to school closures. In line with the ‘No Name Campaign’, UNICEF encouraged parents and caregivers to ensure that their children receive birth certificates.
Through social media, UNICEF showed how the birth and deaths registry has been carrying out their tasks with personal protective equipment. Over two million people were reached with all messages in the last two weeks.

**Education**

The Ghana Education Service, in collaboration with UNICEF, USAID-FHI 360 and other partners, launched its distance Learning Radio programme. The online programme includes core subjects – English, Literacy, Science, Maths, Social Studies and Ghanaian languages – and commenced with literacy sessions for early graders on 15th June.

UNICEF is engaging in discussions led by the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service to bridge the equity gap in learning. Strategies are being established to mainstream issues of inclusivity in radio, TV and online programmes to respond to the diverse needs of learners, including those with visual and hearing impairments as well as learning difficulties. Through UNICEF’s support, the Ghana Education Service has engaged selected regional and district level Officers to initiate the Ghana Learning Radio programme across all 16 regions.

Through UNICEF’s support, the Ghana Education Service has engaged selected regional and district level Officers to initiate the Ghana Learning Radio programme across all 16 regions.

UNICEF has reviewed a draft digital literacy package in support of the Ghana Education Service’s delivery of a structured digital literacy initiative within the school curriculum. The agency also raised awareness of caregivers and learners on the need to stay safe online, especially as learners continue to learn remotely.

**Child Protection**

UNICEF and partners reached 108,650 people (16,876 girls, 14,540 boys, 24,661 women, and 21,102 men) with education on better parenting, prevention of child abuse, sexual and gender-based violence, and the promotion of community-based psychosocial support. Cumulatively, 351,407 individuals in 180 communities, in over 50 districts, in 16 regions increased their knowledge since the start of the crisis.

Beneficiaries were reached through community information centres, information vans, home visits and small group meetings. UNICEF and partners sensitized the target audiences using the child protection community facilitation tool kits and posters with standard COVID-19 prevention and mitigation messaging, prepared by UNICEF and endorsed by the Ghana Health Service.

The findings and outcomes of these sensitization activities will influence the design of the larger district-led programme on the re-opening of schools.

The programme will also link to UNICEF supported interventions with the Ghana Education Service (GES), which have equipped 77 national, regional and district trainers (41 male; 36 female) from the GES, on the use of play and sports in providing psychosocial support to teachers, learners and caregivers.

A group of traditional leaders taking the GACA pledge in Ho, in the Volta Region after a discussion on prevention of violence and abuse against children. ©UNICEF
The Ministries of Gender, Children and Social Protection and of Local Government and Rural Development and UNICEF have coordinated several training events in Volta, Northern and Greater Accra Regions for traditional and religious leaders. The leaders gained new knowledge to use their influence and trust within their communities to serve as “GACA Champions” to spread critical information on COVID-19 and the GACA Child Protection framework. The leaders also recorded messages in their local dialect, which will be played on radios and television stations.

A total of 198,760 people has been reached through ‘Ghanaians Against Child Abuse’ social media handles with COVID-19 and child protection messages. This is an increase from 155,856 during the last reporting period.

Since receiving the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for child-friendly gender-based violence courts, a Judge from the child-friendly gender-based violence court sent a review on the usefulness of the items: “The Chief Justice, the Judicial Service and the Gender-Based Violence Court where I sit as the presiding Judge are grateful to UNICEF for the PPEs, which helped immensely in prioritizing the rights of the child during the COVID-19 pandemic and have helped the court in expediting cases involving children.”

An online survey on the impact of COVID-19 on Residential Homes for Children (RHC) was conducted by the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and UNICEF. Based on the findings, the two organizations developed a Special Guidance for Child Care Facilities on how to prevent and protect Children from COVID-19 and are collaborating with the Ghana Health Service to establish guidelines for Isolation Care Centres and avoid unnecessary separation of children.

UNICEF and DSW are providing handwashing supplies to foster parents and have organised an online meeting with over 100 DSW Officers to present the Standards for Foster Care to support the monitoring of well-being of children placed in foster care. This was a good opportunity to answer questions and address some of the fears and concerns around the virus and the measures taken by the Government.
UNICEF continued to work with partners in monitoring the advanced payments to beneficiaries of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme. Through Technology for Development support, UNICEF cooperated with the Social Protection team and partners in the LEAP Secretariat (under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection) to contact over 10,000 beneficiaries, Community Focal Points and Social Workers. The objective of the survey was to ensure that cash grants had been disbursed and key COVID-19 communication materials and messages had been disseminated.

In collaboration with the Ghana Statistical Service, UNICEF has completed the first round of data collection of the monthly household survey to assess the impact of COVID-19 on members of households, including children. About 3,200 people completed the interviews and 2,000 caregivers completed child-specific additional questions about their access to health, education, and other services, as well their mental health and experiences of violence. The data analysis is ongoing.

Adaptations to ongoing UNICEF programmes

Since the first two cases of coronavirus were confirmed in Ghana on 12 March 2020, UNICEF has, in coordination with national platforms and the UN System in Ghana, accelerated its Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) to stem community transmissions and to mitigate the spread of infection. UNICEF has also promoted Infection Prevention and Control, disease surveillance, appropriate feeding, safe water, adequate sanitation and hygiene, and the provision of supplies. In addition to child protection system strengthening, UNICEF has been supporting the development of learning tools in the context of distance learning.

The UNICEF Startup Lab is a co-creation space and startup incubator located at the UNICEF offices in Accra. It aims to actively engage young Ghanaian startups operating in the health, education, water and sanitation, and social protection sectors around the development of innovative market-driven products and solutions to problems impacting the wellbeing of children and young people, especially the most vulnerable.

This month, 11 young entrepreneurs graduated from the incubation programme, run in collaboration with MEST Africa and the African Health Innovation Centre.

UNICEF is empowering startups at an early stage with critical business skills and mentorship, market-readiness support and investment opportunities to quickly grow and lead transformative social impact businesses.

The next cohort will continue identifying innovative solutions to social issues, such as public health emergencies.
learning and the provision of financial support for the most vulnerable through advance LEAP payments. UNICEF has also coordinated closely with the Ministry of Health, Ghana Health Service and WHO to review preparedness for the resumption of the polio immunization campaign in the context of COVID-19.

In all areas, the ongoing UNICEF programmes are being adapted to the COVID-19 context. UNICEF continues to undertake field missions to implement and monitor critical interventions, taking all precautions required, in line with the UN Programme Criticality Assessment results, and ensuring a 'do no harm' approach. To this end, Work Plans for 2020-2021 were updated and revised in consultation with line Ministries, the UNCT and partners, to best support the COVID-19 response. UNICEF has adjusted its 2020 funding requirements reflected in the COVID-19 Response Plan, dated 12th May 2020.

### Funding Overview and Partnerships

A total of US$ 7.8 Million is still required to facilitate continued access to essential, quality and inclusive social services and the protection of children affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Ghana.

Thanks to the support of development partners and private donors such as the Government of Japan, USAID, DFID, China International Development and Cooperation Agency, Standard Chartered and the Mastercard Foundation, UNICEF has raised US$ 10.4 million out of US$ 18.2 million. Several other development cooperation agencies and partners such as Global Affairs Canada and KOICA have agreed to support re-programming to effectively deliver results for children across the country.

Expressing its sincere gratitude to all its supporters, UNICEF calls for additional funds to fill the continuing gaps in ensuring a comprehensive and effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, for vulnerable children, young people and families in Ghana.

### External Media

- UNICEF StartUp Lab – Young Entrepreneurs graduated in June - Demo Day: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZeLXq5rBic&t=3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZeLXq5rBic&t=3s)

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Hakimatu, 10 months, at her home in Zanguyakura in West Mamprusi. ©UNICEF/UN442980/BUTA
### Annex A - Summary of Programme Results

#### UNICEF Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
<th>2020 target</th>
<th>Total results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk Communication and Community Engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCCE Indicator 1: Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services.</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
<td>23,058,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCCE Indicator 2: Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,800,000</td>
<td>1,658,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCCE Indicator 3: Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms.</td>
<td></td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>149,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WASH and IPC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC Indicator 1: Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services.</td>
<td></td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>258,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC Indicator 2: Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).</td>
<td></td>
<td>2512</td>
<td>6031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC Indicator 3: Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC).</td>
<td></td>
<td>8800</td>
<td>9106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of Health Care Indicator 1: Number of healthcare providers trained in detecting, referral and appropriate management of COVID-19 cases among children, pregnant and breastfeeding women.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of Health Care Indicator 2: Number of children &amp; women receiving essential healthcare services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV &amp; GBV* care in UNICEF supported facilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>403,420</td>
<td>453,774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of Health Care Indicator 3: Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms.</td>
<td></td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>65,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 1: Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,177,934</td>
<td>6,179,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 2: Number of schools implementing safe school protocols (COVID-19 prevention and control).</td>
<td></td>
<td>42,180</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Protection and GBV</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 3: Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements.</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>39 (26 girls and 13 boys)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 4: Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support.</td>
<td></td>
<td>260,000</td>
<td>351407 (Girls-82,573, Boys-72,500, Women-101,525, Men-94,809)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, CP &amp; GBV Services Indicator 5: Number of UNICEF personnel &amp; partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation &amp; referrals for survivors, including for PSEA*.</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Protection</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Protection Indicator 1: Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian multi-sector cash grant for basic needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>322,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Qualitative Indicators

In the last reporting period, what are the top (up to 3) access issues/constraints due to COVID-19 and related response measures, as identified in feedback mechanisms from affected populations, for each of these service areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Area</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(a) Health services access</strong></td>
<td>1. The Government has updated the criteria for recovery and discharge based on revised WHO guidelines on COVID-19 patient pathway, leading to a sharp increase in recoveries and discharge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **(b) Nutrition services: (management of wasting/SAM; nutrition supplements, other services) (List up to 3 issues)** | 1. Lack of supplies for management of severe acute malnutrition.  
2. Low coverage of Iron Folic Supplementation for girls 10-19 years due to the school closures. |
| **(c) Access to food (List up to 3 issues)** | 1. Increase in food prices in major markets especially in the epicentres of the COVID-19 pandemic.  
2. Reduction in the annual growth of the Ghanaian economy from the projected 6.8% to 2.6% for 2020 (MoF, 2020)  
3. Projections of increase in the number of people of PHASE 3/Acute Food and Livelihood crises. |
| **(d) WASH (List up to 3 issues)**         | 1. Procedures for government-led procurement, especially for high volumes of supplies, does not always allow for quick lead times needed in emergency situations. |
| **(e) Education services including continuation of learning options (List up to 3 issues)** | 1. Challenges in reaching all students remotely with the on-going distance learning package due to the locations and access to tools and facilities; and in effectively engaging learners with special learning needs.  
2. Limited capacity at the regional and district levels to implement distance learning initiatives.  
3. Limited radio learning contents for children without access to TV/internet learning as compared to TV contents. Limited capacity of learners and caregivers in relation to digital literacy for improved protection when learning on-line. |
| **(f) Child protection related services (List up to 3 issues)** | 1. Over 60 per cent of foster parents who responded to a feedback survey revealed that they fear being infected  
2. Parents and caregivers are not accessing social welfare services due to the fear of contracting the virus in Accra and Kumasi. |