Situation Overview and Needs

The first two confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Mali on March 25, 2020: As of 7 April, Mali had 56 confirmed cases which were recorded in the district of Bamako as well as in the regions of Kayes, Koulikoro and Mopti, including 6 deaths. More than a thousand contact persons have been identified and are being followed up.

The Government has drawn up a plan for the prevention and the control of the disease with a budget of approximately US$ 57 million that focused towards four main areas: i) Prevention, ii) Communication, iii) Capacity building and iv) Prevention and case management. UNICEF supported the Ministry of health in the finalization of this plan and is positioned on several activities across all the axes and beyond such as risk communication, hygiene reinforcement in health facilities and communities, support to health care activities, support to IPC.

On 25 March 2020, the Government declared a state of health emergency and a curfew from 21h to 5h in the morning which came to complete a set of measures previously adopted including the suspension until further notice of commercial flights from affected countries, except for cargo flights; the closure of public, private and religious schools (nursery, primary, secondary and higher), including medersas, for three (3) weeks; the suspension until further notice...
of all public gatherings, including workshops, symposia, seminars and popular meetings; the prohibition, until further notice, of social, sports, cultural and political groups of more than 50 people, the closure, until further notice, of nightclubs and dance bars.

In line with the National COVID-19 Plan and the UNICEF Global HAC COVID-19, UNICEF in Mali has elaborated a response plan budgeted at $24.2 million. This will be part of the HRP Covid-19 that is being finalized by the HCT. This plan focuses on the following areas: i) Coordination, ii) Communication (C4D and External Communication), iii) community-based surveillance (involving CSAs and community platforms) and iv) WASH activities (for prevention and control of infection) and is being implemented through a coordinated and multisectoral response. In the meantime, UNICEF continues to address the overall humanitarian needs of children in Mali in the areas of, Nutrition, Education, Child Protection and Social Protection based on the 2020 regular HAC appeal.

The COVID epidemic further weakens the country which is experiencing a protracted humanitarian situation: one fourth of the Malian population depends on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs; since the closure of schools, approximately 3.8 million children no longer have access to education (pre-school, primary and secondary), 2 million children outside of school no longer have the possibility of accessing alternative opportunities for integration into the formal education system throughout the country; children face higher risks of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and inadequate protection throughout the country.

Coordination and Partnerships

The Government has set up two Commissions (i) The Central Coordination Cell chaired by Secretary General Ministry of Health and (ii) the Crisis Committee for Epidemic Management COVID-19 led by the National Institute of Public Health (INSP) for the coordination and the management of the national response. 13 Technical Commissions are also created to address specific issues. UNICEF participates in the works of the Commissions on Communication, IPC, Epidemiological Surveillance and Logistics.

At the regional level, Disaster Management Committees are the main coordination frameworks for prevention and response against COVID-19 and are activated UNICEF participates to the activities of these committees through its five field offices.

The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) has established a COVID-19 working group - of which UNICEF is a member - which aims to coordinate and guide the work of the inter-cluster, health cluster and humanitarian coordination structures. This Working Group is finalizing a multi-sectoral humanitarian operational plan to: i) Support the Government through the Health Cluster to scale up preventive measures and response to the COVID-19 outbreak and ii) Prioritize essential life-saving activities within the framework of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2020 while taking into account the increased humanitarian needs following the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Clusters also are in the process of defining strategic and operational orientations which integrate the prevention and response to COVID.

Summary Analysis of Preparedness and Response Actions

Risk Communication and Community Engagement

UNICEF is supporting the Government in the implementation of Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) activities both at national and regional level. Three subcommittees are put in place i.e. i) Risk communication and community engagement, ii) Media and Public relation and iii) Digital Communication. Risk communication and community engagement components are included in the regional response plans adopted in Gao, Tombouctou, Kayes and Sikasso. A mapping of key influencers in all regions had been developed including mapping of the most trusted local radios.

Key messages on the prevention of the COVID-19 were broadcasted via national, local, community and confessional radios. Messages from for community and religious leaders being shared via TV, radios, WhatsApp and You tube in local language and French. 20 child journalists were briefed on key sensitization messages on COVID-19.
Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) and WASH
UNICEF provided 9 tons of chlorine (200 drums of 45 kg each) and 500 boxes of 48 pieces of soap, (24,000 pieces in total) to the Ministry of Health to be used in 5 COVID treatment centers and benefit to 125,000 people.

Requests have been received from the regional health directorates and are being processed to support the implementation of regional COVID-19 plans. UNICEF has also launched a process to revise its ongoing partnership agreements with the 9 national NGOs (IMADEL, GARDL, AMSS, TASSAGHT, SOLISA, SI, Alpha Log, AMPDR, Solidarite Plurielle) for the integration of minimum WASH COVID-19 package in health care facilities as well as at community level.

UNICEF as the lead agency of the WASH cluster contributed in the development of guidelines and procedures to ensure the continuity in WASH interventions and the prevention and control of infections linked to COVID-19 in Mali. These guidelines integrate all harmonized communication tools as well as various technical resources to support partners. The adaptation of minimum EHA / COVID-19 packages in health care facilities, in communities (community relays, IDP sites, public spaces) and at the household level in order to facilitate intervention by partners is underway. A mapping of partners capacities at national level has been completed and is useful to conduct a gap analysis and elaborate recommendations for a better orientation and positioning of partners.

As part of the integration of the WASH in Child Protection, UNICEF ensured the provision of critical WASH supplies such as washing hand stations, soaps and alcohol-based gels in four transit centers (Gao, Kidal, Mopti and Bamako) and child friendly spaces all those activities meant to benefit approximately 1,240 children.

Provision of Healthcare and Nutrition Services
UNICEF contributed to the development of the National Response Plan by providing a technical assistance to the Government which was extended to the process for the elaboration of the terms of references of the National Coordination Committee and the setting up of the 13 technical Commissions as well as for the elaboration of other technical documents and data collection tools.

As a member of National Surveillance Commission, UNICEF contributed to develop community surveillance documentation for the notification, alert and reporting of COVID-19 cases.

UNICEF provided 54 tents to the Ministry of Health which are being used in Bamako as well as at regional level to expand the capacity of the health care facilities and country points of entry. This effort is being continued to reinforce surveillance mechanism around districts in the north and the center of country.

UNICEF received a shipment of 7.5 tons of vital health supplies in Bamako, on a flight co-funded by the European Union and the Danish Government. It was the first offshore cargo to arrive in Mali in support of UNICEF response. The supplies, supported by SIDA and BMZ will support UNICEF’s humanitarian work for children and families in Mali, as well as providing support to the Government of Mali in preventing and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in coordination with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the wider UN system. UNICEF is grateful to the European Union and the Government of Denmark for their precious support in these challenging times where the supply chain is significantly disrupted across the world.

Access to Continuous Education and Child Protection Services
In the education sector with the Education Cluster members, UNICEF is supporting the Government, through the Ministry of Education (MoE), to develop and implement the COVID-19 response strategy and plan. The objectives of the strategy are i) to ensure learning continues in a protective and inclusive environment through distance learning such as radio, TV, internet and using adapted printed pedagogical material and ii) to support the preparation of the reopening of schools (incl. safe school protocol). To do so, a task team consisting of cluster and Local Education Group members has been set up.

Radio education materials were offered to the Ministry of Education including 72 Literacy + 72 Numeracy scripts and recordings for children with at least 4 years of schooling and 72 scripts for children who never went to school as well as for parents. These lessons are under review by the pedagogical committee to plan the broadcasting.

As part of the Child Protection activities, UNICEF is working with the Ministry of health as well as with the National Direction of Protection of women and children (DNPEF) to coordinate and reinforce the capacity of child protection
partners to prevent and respond to COVID-19. UNICEF and DNPEF are exploring the possibility of setting up new temporary centres in Bamako and regions to provide shelter and holistic support to children at high protection risks including violence, contamination and spreading of COVID-19 such unaccompanied and separated children, children released from detention who do not have any caregiver to support them, children separated from the parents who are in quarantine, children on move and those who became orphans due to the COVID-19. Regarding the mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), UNICEF is closely working with partners to reorganize MHPSS activities that are sensitive to COVID-19 prevention and aligned with social distancing measures. Sensitization activities on prevention of COVID-19 were administrated to 47 administrative staff and 165 children in four transit centers. UNICEF is in the process of amending partnership documents to enable the implementing partners to carry out activities related to the prevention of COVID-19 and provide adequate response for children affected by COVID-19 or those at protection risk.

Supply and Logistics

A US $ 353,000 supply plan is being implemented for the procurement of various materials and products. The pipeline includes - mainly WASH, medical and personal protective equipment - to be used as part of the response.

Funding Overview

UNICEF requires $24,2 million to respond to the epidemics in Mali. UNICEF in Mali has negotiated with some donors, their flexibility regarding the reprogramming of existing funds within certain limits, allowing us to allocate them quickly to where it is most needed and as the situation evolves. Mali Country office has already committed US $ 1.2 million including US $ 200,000 of its regular resources. With the fast-moving spread of the pandemic, UNICEF in Mali requires, now more than ever, additional timely and flexible funding to respond effectively and efficiently to the crisis and ensure life saving programmes for the ongoing humanitarian needs.

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<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Funding in US$</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C4D: Strengthening risk communication and community engagement including digital engagement and rumors monitoring</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH: Providing hygiene and personal protection materials and production of IPC comprehensive protocol</td>
<td>3,510,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEALTH AND NUTRITION: Supporting provision of adequate health care for women, children and vulnerable communities including case management</td>
<td>1,725,000</td>
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<td>CHILD PROTECTION: Providing access to continuous child protection services</td>
<td>2,550,000</td>
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<td>EDUCATION: Ensure continuity of learning in a protective, equitable learning environment for school children affected by the closure of schools</td>
<td>4,500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCIAL PROTECTION: Supporting the design and implementation of shock responsive social protection programme, including cash transfers</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>PME: Data collection and analysis of disease and secondary impact on women and children</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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<td>External Comms: documentation of prevention and response through multi-media</td>
<td>20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordination and Operational Support</td>
<td>230,000</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>24,235,000</strong></td>
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External Media

- Child-led campaign against disinformation, including myth busters and child-friendly multimedia assets: [https://weshare.unicef.org/Share/f5f4e82s8ct18padvntl52b8l055vuvup](https://weshare.unicef.org/Share/f5f4e82s8ct18padvntl52b8l055vuvup)