UNICEF Cambodia COVID-19 RESPONSE SITUATION REPORT

Reporting period 15th March – 22nd April 2020

Situation at a glance

Number of cases as of 22nd April 2020: **122**

Deaths reported: **0**

Over **90,000** migrant workers have returned to Cambodia.

All schools and universities are closed.

UNICEF Cambodia continues to support the Royal Government of Cambodia and WHO in risk communication and community engagement. This is to ensure that the entire population, especially the most marginalized women and children, have access to reliable and tailored information on the risks of COVID-19 so they can protect themselves and prevent the disease from spreading.

Summary of actions taken by UNICEF and its partners

<table>
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<th>Critical Areas</th>
<th>Key Actions Taken</th>
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<tr>
<td>Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)</td>
<td>Media assets and communications: Estimated beneficiaries: 10 million (current population of Cambodia is 16 million)</td>
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<td>- UNICEF has provided technical support to the Ministry of Interior on operationalizing the COVID-19 RCCE guidelines at the sub-national level.</td>
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<td>- 36 assets have been produced for mass consumption to support the Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other governmental partners. Assets include: 14 television spots, 15 radio spots, 1 influencer parenting video, 2 short videos on MHPSS, 1 handwashing song for TikTok, 2 nutrition TV spots, 1 nutrition poster, 4 posters, 2 fliers and 1 booklet; they are also in sign language. Content in four indigenous languages is aired on two local radio stations in the north-eastern provinces.</td>
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<td>- COVID-19 messages were integrated in the Cambodia PROTECT campaign and the UNICEF-supported Adolescent and Youth Reference Group’s social media platforms. These have reached at least 1.8 million people.</td>
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<td>- Facebook pages of government institutions, including the page of the Prime Minister (the most followed page in Cambodia), partners and celebrities have streamed UNICEF communication assets.</td>
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<td>- Two video messages from the highest-ranking Buddhist monks have been streamed on radio and television stations.</td>
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<td>- Loudspeakers across several villages are playing the radio spots. The Provincial Department of Rural Development launched talk shows on COVID-19 in five provinces.</td>
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<td>- A video on distance learning featuring the Minister of Education, and three other COVID-19 education assets were produced and are being broadcast on Apsara TV and on the e-learning platform of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS).</td>
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Critical Areas

- **Posters:** 161,050 COVID-19 posters and 85,428 posters about handwashing were printed and distributed between 15 and 28 March, with an additional 130,000 COVID-19 posters and 130,000 handwashing posters distributed between 27 March and 10 April, mostly to provinces with high numbers of returned migrants. Posters have been distributed to:
  - Governmental entities and NGO partners.
  - District and commune offices, all 24 detention centres, 351 residential care facilities and two drug user rehabilitation centres.
  - 70 health facilities.
  - Private bottled water sellers in urban areas, with an estimated reach of 30,000 people living in Phnom Penh.
  - Head monks in all 25 provinces and 75 pagodas in Phnom Penh, with other assets (posters, handwashing posters, radio and television spots) via the Telegram App for further distribution across all pagodas.
  - ID-poor households in six districts.
  - Ethnic minority communities during child marriage awareness sessions.
  - Mine risk education operators and NGOs active in the child protection response to COVID-19 for distribution to communities, parents, caregivers and children.
  - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) for distribution at border entry points.
  - Schools – these have been pre-positioned.
  - 70 health facilities are streaming risk communication messages on their televisions in outpatient consultation rooms during peak hours.

**Partnerships:**
- The European Chamber of Commerce is distributing UNICEF’s RCCE communication package to 10,926 businesses for them to display and to further disseminate to their customers.
- The phone companies SMART and Cellcard are sending SMS on COVID-19 to their customers.
- Facebook Cambodia is supporting UNICEF to promote content on COVID-19 prevention.

**Additional community engagement support:** In support of RCCE, UNICEF teams visited 13 provinces to assist provincial governors to:
  - Evaluate local COVID-19 challenges and responses already in place.
  - Support provincial authorities in RCCE and identify potential local partners, such as commune committees for women and children, the Red Cross and existing village community engagement structures.
  - Implement multi-sectoral communication strategies using existing collaboration with social services such as health, education, WASH, social protection and child protection.

**Health care and nutrition services**

- The sub-national health system for COVID-19 preparedness and response capacity was rapidly assessed in five north-eastern provinces and a capacity development plan was discussed with local health counterparts.
- In response to the critical need at local level, disbursed funds have been re-programmed to support capacity development interventions for rapid response teams and health staff to strengthen their ability to respond to COVID-19. Additional support to fill these gaps is being developed.
Provision of access to continuous education, social protection, child protection and gender-based violence protection services

Child Protection:

- The Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) issued an instruction on the prevention of COVID-19 to all state-run residential care institutions. As a result of UNICEF advocacy efforts, the instruction now covers all care facilities, including NGO-run residential care institutions and community-based facilities.
- In support of MoSVY, UNICEF developed case management guidelines for frontline child protection workers and released a new instruction on the roles and responsibilities of provincial departments of social affairs in protecting vulnerable children when responding to the pandemic.
- The MoSVY Child Protection in Emergencies contingency plan was revised to expand its scope to cover COVID-19. UNICEF provided orientation on COVID-19 preparedness and response to key staff from MoSVY and provincial departments of social affairs in 15 provinces. The Child Protection in Emergencies Coordination Group for COVID-19 was activated under the leadership of MoSVY, with UNICEF and NGOs. The cluster is calling for regular coordination meetings.
- The General Department of Prisons issued instructions on preventive and protective measures against COVID-19 to all correctional education centres and prisons.
- UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN WOMEN co-signed an official letter to the Ministry of Justice and the General Department of Prisons asking for alternatives to detention for prisoners.
- The partnership with the NGO ICS-SP expanded to organize awareness raising campaigns for prevention and support to parents and caregivers affected by COVID-19.
- Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) messages were translated into Khmer and distributed through a number of interventions. A partnership between UNICEF and the NGO TPO began with six counsellors being dedicated to remote MHPSS services through three hotlines and a social media platform.
- UNICEF is liaising with IOM and other agencies on collaborative efforts to support returning migrants.
- UNICEF engaged in discussions with UN women, UNFPA and OHCHR to strengthen collaboration in integrating child protection, Gender-based violence (GBV), MHPSS and health services as well as Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) during the COVID-19 response.
- UNICEF Cambodia is coordinating with the UNICEF Regional Office as well as UNODC and UN WOMEN in the country to co-develop posters and a Code of Conduct for law enforcement officers in border locations in Asia to ensure the rights of women and children in the context of COVID-19.

Education:

- With support from UNICEF, MoEYS made e-learning available through its YouTube and Facebook pages. The lessons initially covered Grade 9 and Grade 12 and will expand to cover early childhood, primary, lower and upper secondary education grades, as well as inclusive education for children with hearing impairments, and multilingual education for children from ethnic minorities.
- 138 video lessons for grade 9 and a total of 150 video lessons for grade 12 have been produced.

UNICEF continues to support routine and outreach Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health (MNCAH) services, including immunization and nutrition, in order to mitigate the impact on children, families and communities. UNICEF supports the immunization of 1.5 million children under 5 years old.

Over USD $100,000 nutrition commodities have been procured to treat more than 1000 children with severe acute malnutrition.
The e-learning assets are broadcast on a new national education television channel seven days per week. They cover Grades 1 to 12.

In primary education, 33 online distance lessons have been finalized.

The recently established national TV education channel (TVK2) started daily broadcasting the video lessons since from ECE to upper secondary. The TV channel is accessible in 25 provinces and is estimated to reach 10 million.

**Data & Social Research**

**Informing response programming and development of social policies:**

- With support from UNICEF, MoSVY developed a remotely administered survey to assess the delivery of the cash transfer programme for pregnant women and children aged 0–2 years. The questionnaire aims to identify barriers faced by both service providers and beneficiaries, as well as the ongoing socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on beneficiary households.
- In collaboration with other UN agencies, UNICEF is leading the social impact assessment of COVID-19. During this reporting period a concept note and a methodology for the impact assessment have been developed and agreed upon across all UN agencies and international finance institutions (the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank).
- UNICEF has developed a behavioural change monitoring survey to better understand the effectiveness of the risk communication and community engagement efforts. The survey will be launched in the next reporting period.

**Critical supply & logistics**

**Hygiene supplies:** The aim was to procure and provide soap, hand sanitizers and water filters to health facilities, schools, migrant centres and residential care facilities

- 273,215 soaps were distributed between 15 and 28 March, with an additional 19,000 soap bars distributed between 27 March and 10 April. Soap was distributed to:
  - All 351 residential care facilities, 24 detention centres and two drug user rehabilitation centres that accommodate children.
  - The Provincial Department of Women’s Affairs in Ratanakiri, for ethnic minority communities.
  - Local NGOs, for distribution to communities.
  - Monk councils, for 75 pagodas in Phnom Penh and all pagodas in provincial towns and hotspot districts across the country.
  - ID-Poor households – 37,000 bars of soap.
  - Migrant transit centres – 20 water filters, 1,600 bars of soap and 160 laundry detergents.
  - Provincial departments of social affairs in five provinces – 1,656 bottles of hand sanitizer for further distribution to children in all 138 residential care facilities in these provinces.

**COVID-19 prevention packages:**

- Packages were initiated for 813 schools, however due to school closures supplies were pre-positioned with the MoEYS School Health Department, and at sub-national level with provincial offices of education. This will remain until schools reopen or until the supplies are re-purposed as needed.
Key challenges

- Capacity needs to handle COVID-19 preparedness and response actions at national and sub-national levels.
- UNICEF beneficiaries have suffered general economic losses, which could lead to secondary impacts related to child protection, such as increased exposure to violence.
- The digital divide – providing continuous learning to students with no / infrequent internet access.
- Parents unaware of existing e-learning platforms and announcements by MoEYS on e-learning.
- Case management and follow up of children in the process of reintegration in the child protection sector.
- Effects of self-quarantine and social isolation, including psychological harm and risk of domestic violence.

Humanitarian leadership, coordination and strategy

- UNICEF is grateful for the generous financial support of our donors including United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Government of Japan, Global Fund for Education (GPE), European Union (EU), Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA), as well as for the collaboration with our governmental, development and civil society partners in the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- UNICEF coordinates closely with WHO and other UN agencies to plan and implement the UN Country Team COVID-19 support plan through the UN technical working group and sub-working groups, such as the UN sub-working group on RCCE.
- UNICEF is working with the private sector to disseminate messages and is coordinating closely with leading ministries and relevant organizations on COVID-19 (Ministry of Health, MoEYS, MoSVY, Ministry of Cults and Religion, Ministry of Interior, as well as Centre for Disease Control Cambodia, the Cambodian Institute for Health Promotion, WHO Cambodia and relevant international and local NGOs) and in planning and implementing strategic, comprehensive RCCE activities.

More information

- UNICEF Cambodia’s dedicated COVID-19 page: https://www.unicef.org/cambodia/
- UNICEF Cambodia’s COVID-19 media assets: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1waFqUzHR9CC9KwB1rXJO6cPoMtOSXOnP

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