



29 April – 5 May 2020

Highlights

UNICEF works for children and adolescents in 22 countries and territories¹ in Europe and Central Asia Region (ECAR). UNICEF is also present in Italy, supporting refugee and migrant populations.

- With Tajikistan declaring cases (230 confirmed, 3 deaths) of COVID-19 this week, Turkmenistan remains the only country in ECAR with no Government-confirmed cases.
- UNICEF and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) are working together on COVID-19-related content, including remote learning, positive parenting, and risk communication for dissemination by EBU member television and radio stations in multiple languages in 15 ECAR countries. The EBU has agreed to expand the collaboration to include its interested members in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.
- ECAR countries are at different stages of pandemic response, with some intensifying lockdowns as the number of positive cases increases (e.g., Georgia, Tajikistan). However, others are also preparing to gradually relax containment measures, with some turning to UNICEF and UN partners for technical assistance to formulate policies and procedures that ensure children’s safety against infection as they return to classrooms and to help resume routine health services like vaccination.
- This week, UNICEF support to countries has resulted in concrete progress in ensuring immunization services for children. For example, in Kosovo*, UNICEF has helped launch the resumption of routine immunization programmes. In Kyrgyzstan, UNICEF and the Ministry of Health promoted the work of mobile vaccination teams that are providing measles and rubella

¹ Albania, Armenia, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Greece, Kazakhstan, Kosovo* (References to Kosovo* are in line with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 1244), Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan ** Source: World Health Organization (WHO) 6 April 2020. Figures do not include Italy.
 PHOTO: In Georgia, UNICEF delivered essential hygiene and food items to 380 Roma families.

UNICEF Europe & Central Asia Region (ECAR)

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Situation Report No. 6

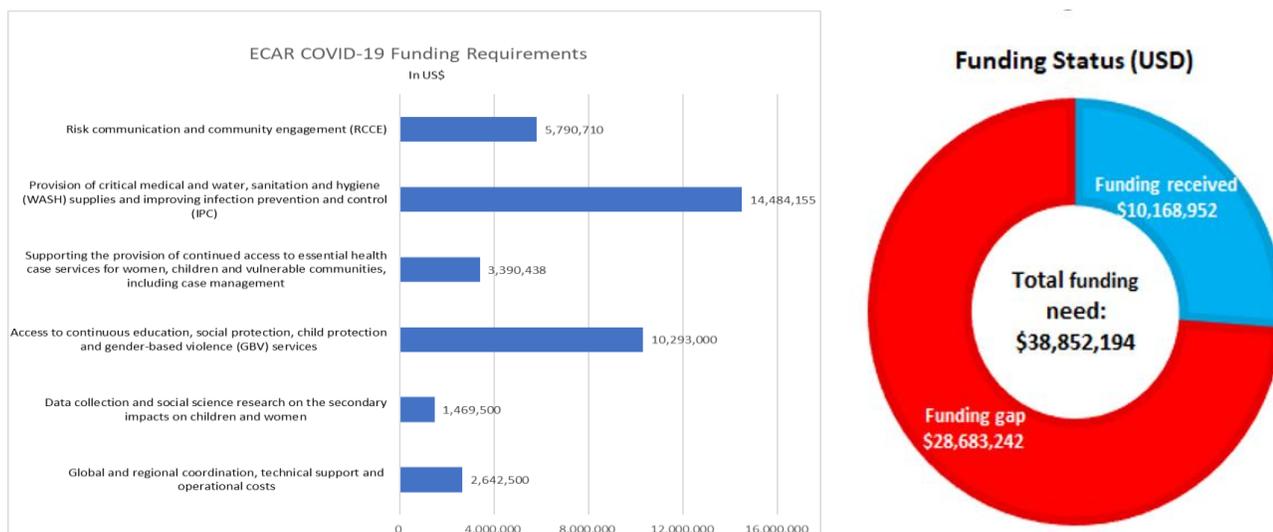
- 206,427 COVID-19 cases** in 22 countries**
- 5,550 COVID-19 deaths** in 22 countries**
- 52.1 million children** affected by COVID-19-related school and learning centre closure
- US \$38 million funding requirement** for ECAR response

immunization during the state of emergency. In Turkmenistan, a supply plan for re-stocking vaccines and ensuring cold chain has advanced.

- In Croatia, the Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Health accepted a complete handover from UNICEF’s implementing partner, Médecins du Monde (Mdm), for funding and delivering all health services at reception centres accommodating asylum seeking families and children. In the COVID-19 context, this mainstreaming of vital health services for this vulnerable group will minimize their risk to infection.
- In Kazakhstan, UNICEF in partnership with UNESCO and Ministries of Health and Education, enabled 600 multi-graded remote schools to implement COVID-19 school safety procedures and recommendations during quarantine and post-quarantine periods as children continue learning in these schools.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

Under UNICEF’s Global Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) for the COVID-19 response, UNICEF ECAR is appealing for a little over **\$38 million**. Against this target, ECAR has received over **\$10 million**² or **26%** of required funding.



In this reporting period, UNICEF ECAR gratefully acknowledges flexible, unearmarked support from the [COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund for WHO](#) for Albania and Romania. Such funding allows UNICEF to assure response to areas of highest priority. UNICEF is also extremely appreciative of private sector partners who continue to demonstrate strong support across the region. In Bulgaria, hygiene and sanitation supplies from Henkel and Mexon and education kits from Office1Superstore are making a huge difference for children and families, especially in informal settlements. In Croatia, Tele2 donated additional SIM cards and mobile devices for social and legal services staff providing on-line counselling, assistance and family mediation. In Greece, the Akelius Foundation (through UNICEF Sweden) agreed to a top up of funding to support procurement and distribution of WASH and dignity kits that will help mitigate infection among children and families living in appallingly overcrowded refugee reception facilities on the islands of Samos and Lesvos. In Bulgaria, UNICEF launched an integrated fundraising focusing on support for a learning platform for children living with disabilities. UNICEF is reaching out to existing partners Lidl, Postbank, and as well as the telecom community. In Belarus, UNICEF has launched an [appeal](#) to leverage resources from private sector partners, while in Turkey, UNICEF with the Turkish National Committee, is also exploring opportunities to mobilise support from the private sector.

Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

This week was marked by natural disasters and political stresses that have added to humanitarian needs and complicated countries’ COVID-19 responses:

- Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were forced to evacuate tens of thousands of people from the Syr Darya river basin after [a reservoir dam on the Uzbek side burst](#) on 1 May, flooding large areas on both sides of the border. The Government set up temporary shelters in schools and the Government Commission chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister is leading and

² List of donors available on request

coordinating the response. In all, 31,606 people, including 11,533 children were evacuated, and around half have been able to return to their homes by 4 May. In Uzbekistan, around 70,000 people were evacuated from the Sardoba reservoir and Syrdarya region. Elsewhere in the country, heavy rain in Samarkand, Bukhara, Navoi and Kashkadarya reportedly killed one person and caused extensive damage to buildings and electricity and gas supplies. In Kyrgyzstan, heavy flooding occurred on 2 May in the south region of Batken causing damage to livelihoods and infrastructure and potentially creating additional humanitarian needs. UNICEF has not received formal requests for humanitarian assistance but stands ready to support. In Turkmenistan, on 28 April strong winds and heavy rain caused damage in some places of Lebap velayat (province), including Turkmenabad city. However, there has been no official statement on the extent of the damage. The UN Country Team stands ready to support if requested.

- In Turkmenistan, the Government has not officially confirmed any COVID-19 infections in the country and approval of the Country Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP), is still formally pending. The process of decision-making for preparedness measures that UNICEF and UN are proposing continues to take time, with discussions mainly occurring at a technical level. In Ukraine, there was a significant increase in hostilities which resulted in civilian casualties and damage to non-military infrastructure (private houses, electrical grids, water facilities, etc.). Unconstrained and spontaneous disregard of quarantine measures by the population (despite the official decision to soften quarantine measures from next week), is posing a major challenge in containing the epidemic in the absence of wide scale testing and proper epidemiological surveillance.

During this reporting week, in response to a surge in COVID-19 cases, some countries (e.g., Georgia, Tajikistan), are tightening lockdown measures. Tajikistan confirmed the first cases of COVID-19 on 30 April, and by 4 May, the Ministry of Health counted 230 confirmed infections, and 3 deaths. A national COVID-19 task force led by Prime Minister enacted mandatory wearing of masks in public places and reinforced preliminary restrictive measures, including a two-week suspension of schools. WHO dispatched a group of experts on a technical mission to Tajikistan to support Government in their response, and UNICEF as co-lead on Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), has been providing communication and media support.

Meanwhile, in Serbia, a medical study on the coronavirus is set to begin later this week to determine the effects of the pandemic on the population. Epidemiologists will conduct the study to determine the number of asymptomatic and mild forms of infection as well as herd immunity to COVID-19. The study should cover some 7,000 households with 17,000 people on a voluntary basis. The households will be selected at random and contacted by telephone.

School re-openings are being planned where countries are contemplating partial lifting of COVID-19 containment measures. Some countries (e.g. Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Croatia, Greece—where planned re-opening will affect refugee and migrant children living on sites or in urban areas, Serbia, Ukraine) are taking steps to ease lockdown and quarantine protocols in phases, for example, the re-opening of school by year group in Albania, Croatia, Greece. Some have however precluded a return to school until September 2020 (e.g. Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Romania). Proposed re-opening of schools has elicited mixed reactions. In Belarus, a rapid online survey revealed only 0.7% of parents not following precautions around COVID-19 safety and 54% citing distance learning during school closures as a relevant government measure to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

In Croatia, while the Institute for Public Health (IPH) published guidelines for safe school procedures, concerns remain on whether schools are adequately equipped to manage safe hygiene and social distancing measures. In some countries, (e.g., Albania, North Macedonia) UNICEF is collaborating with education authorities to ensure safe school openings, especially for the most vulnerable children. Countries that continue with school closures also highlight profound difficulties in ensuring equity in distance learning. For example, in Bulgaria, UNICEF is ensuring that education materials that bridge gaps in accessing distance learning opportunities reach girls in correctional boarding schools and refugee and migrant children. Moldova struggles with the challenge of ensuring equitable education for all when 16,000 children and about 2,900 teachers do not have access to enabling technologies for distance education. Montenegro identified the need for more support to reach Roma children who require more intensive support with homework and distance learning. In Romania, access to continuous online learning is extremely limited and drop-out risks are intensifying.

In positive developments, in Albania, UNICEF advocacy has resulted in a gradual shift in the thinking of justice professionals as the number of children in pre-trial detention continued to drop. Checks performed by medical personnel following COVID-19 protocols have identified no infections among the children or staff. In Bulgaria, with UNICEF technical assistance, the Ombudsperson's Office issued recommendations to the Ministry of Education and Science on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children deprived of liberty in correctional-educational boarding schools. In Turkey, the Ministry of Justice reported that approximately 750 children were released from prisons following the amendment on the Law on Enforcement of Sentences. UNICEF is providing technical support to the Ministry to sustain support services in detention centres as well as in local communities, including through online case management. In Kazakhstan, videos from residential institutions showing

developmental and learning activities during quarantine have been co-created with children and posted on social media by the Child Rights Protection Committee.

In Greece, UNICEF continues to call for the immediate transfer of all vulnerable refugees, including children, to the Greek mainland as soon as possible and in line with the most recent public health measures and guidelines. This is particularly considering the COVID-19 outbreak where inadequate water and sanitation facilities inside Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) are exacerbated by severe overcrowding, creating increased risks for children. There are now 202 confirmed cases in the refugee and migrant population, including 12 children. In response to the severe overcrowding in RICs, the Government transferred 269 vulnerable refugees/migrants from the islands to the mainland between 27 – 29 April. UNICEF participated in national coordination efforts on the proposed relocation of 1,600 unaccompanied children (UAC) from Greece to European Member states and, in partnerships with IOM, issued SOPs that form the basis of the relocation and reintegration effort. In Italy, within the overall response and coordination, UNICEF has been advocating with key stakeholders for adequate consideration to be given to the situation of migrants and refugees, including those hosted by the reception system as well as those outside the formal system living in informal settlements or in transit i.e., families with young children, young boys and girls who are at greater risk.

Governments are preparing for the socio-economic impact of imposed lockdown and quarantine. For example, in Armenia, over 23,000 businesses and 825,000 people benefited from Government allocated resources as assistance packages. In Bulgaria the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is focusing on low-income and the elderly, with plans to provide up to BGN 5.2 million (\$2.9 million) to hot lunch programmes, emergency social support, and delivery of hand sanitizers. In Croatia, at the end of April, there were 158,795 unemployed people, and according to the European Commission (EC), expectations for Croatia's economy has dropped to an all-time low. The Croatian Employment Service (HZZ) on 29 April published a list showing that 83,955 employers had taken government grants in the net amount of HRK 3,250 (US\$ 492) per employee. In Kazakhstan, citizens, who lost their income will be entitled to a one-time \$99 allowance, and to date, 4.25 million people have received such financial support. Migrants are however excluded from accessing this benefit. In Kyrgyzstan, UNICEF is currently working with the World Bank to analyse the impact of COVID-19 on poverty and vulnerability. With technical assistance from Maastricht University, UNICEF will be providing an analysis of possible cash assistance as a social protection response, looking at current cash transfers to develop possible scenarios.

In Montenegro, the IMF has forecasted an up to 9% recession of the economy, particularly as tourist sector, which has been severely impacted, accounts for 20% of the country's GDP. The Government swiftly adopted policy support measures in two packages to help the economy to deal with the consequences of the pandemic. A rapid social impact assessment highlighted social assistance via humanitarian cash transfers is urgently needed for single parent and Roma families, and for youth with diminished job prospects. In Romania, a UNICEF rapid assessment conducted with the participation of the National Authority of Child Rights Protection, the World Bank, Terre des Hommes, Step by Step, and the National Council for Institutionalized Youth, found that many vulnerable families (e.g., Roma, newly unemployed) do not have financial means to buy basic food items. In Tajikistan the demand for social protection cash and non-cash support is tremendous as the number of vulnerable people has increase along with shut down of livelihoods. In Ukraine, discussion with First Lady are taking place on how to scale up social protection programmes, including school feeding programmes and one-off cash grants. In Uzbekistan, World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), UNICEF and other UN agencies have formed a task force to assess the socio-economic impact of the COVID 19 pandemic.

Partnerships & Coordination

In many ECAR countries, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) is taking a leadership role in activating sector coordination mechanisms and ensuring a concerted approach between the UN, Government, key partners and donors. In some countries, UNICEF leads UN coordination on the response (e.g., Bulgaria, Romania, Turkmenistan). UNICEF is an active participant in UN coordination mechanisms and is providing inputs into COVID-19 national-level preparedness and response plans, and related discussions on reducing longer-term socio-economic impacts.

Across ECAR, UNICEF is leading, co-leading or supporting sector specific COVID-19 task forces or working groups, including: Child Protection, including children with disabilities (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Serbia, Turkey); Education (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan); Food Security and Logistics (Kyrgyzstan); Gender and gender-based violence (GBV) (Armenia, Moldova, Serbia); Health/ Nutrition (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan); Infection, Prevention and Control Capacity (Serbia); Health Procurement (Moldova, Uzbekistan); Psychosocial Support (Armenia); Risk Communication (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Montenegro, Kazakhstan, Romania, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan); Socio-economic impact, e.g., cash transfer, social protection (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy Kazakhstan, Kosovo*,

Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan); and WASH (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan).

In Turkey partners, including UNICEF, are coordinating COVID-19 response for refugee and migrant population and vulnerable host communities within the Regional Refugee and Resilience (3RP) mechanism, while in Ukraine, overall coordination for nationwide COVID-19 response is led by the Resident Coordinator and WHO, with complementary support of UN-OCHA.

Summary of UNICEF's ECA Region Preparedness and Response Actions

Supplies: Global shortages and grounded international flights continue to impede procurement and delivery PPE to front line workers in health and protection services. Domestic lockdowns and quarantined communities are also causing difficulties ensuring basic WASH supplies reach vulnerable children and families. This week:

- In Belarus, Georgia and Uzbekistan, UNICEF supplied PPE (e.g., caps, face shields, gloves, masks) to health clinics, health workers, hospitals, and residential care homes.
- In Kosovo*, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro Serbia, Ukraine, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, UNICEF supplied WASH items (chlorine, drinking water, hygiene kits, menstrual hygiene supplies, sanitizers, soap, water containers, water filters, water purification tablets) to children in specialized correctional institutions, vulnerable families (e.g., Roma families, refugee families), health centres, line Ministries (e.g., Ministry of Emergency Services in Kyrgyzstan, Ministry of Health and Social Protection in Tajikistan), and residential care homes.
- In Serbia and Ukraine, UNICEF supplied medical equipment (pulse oximeters, oxygen flowmeter) were delivered to health centres and hospitals.
- In Bulgaria, UNICEF delivered educational supplies (e.g., stationery), to vulnerable families with children in grades one to four.

Provision of Healthcare and Nutrition Services: This week, UNICEF activities in ECAR strongly focused on immunization programmes and capacity building of front-line health workers to deliver services online.

- In Albania, UNICEF was requested to support the subgroup of the Institute of Public Health (IPH) dealing with the forecasting and procurement of influenza vaccine. A webinar was organized with representatives from IPH and the team of master trainers in home visiting to discuss plans for the continuation/re-start of home visiting activities for infant and young children, as well as for launching a new parenting app as part of the UNICEF ECA Regional Office initiative.
- In Armenia, the development of guidelines and recommendations for health providers on prevention of COVID-19 transmission during home visits as well as counselling tools on ensuring continuity of optimal nutrition practices of children were initiated.
- In Azerbaijan, social media platforms on parenting counselling and education jointly launched by UNICEF and Regional Development Public Union (RiiB) of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) generated 12,500 followers within two weeks. The platforms have launched discussion on health (including mental health) and nutrition in early childhood development (ECD).
- In Kosovo*, the immunization programme was re-started in all Primary Health Care centres. UNICEF equipped around 200 nurses with phone credit cards to enable one to one calls with parent, in place of face-to-face visits.
- In Kyrgyzstan, UNICEF and the Ministry of Health issued joint videos promoting the work of mobile vaccination teams which provide measles and rubella immunization during the state of emergency. A pilot project creating an online platform for village health committees (VHCs) is now ready for scaling up and will enable VHCs to raise awareness on COVID-19 safety.
- In Italy, UNICEF actively [advocated](#) to maintain functionality of routine immunization services; and strengthen vaccination access among the most vulnerable population groups including migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. UNICEF, in partnerships with Médecins du Monde (Mdm) was able to reach refugee and migrants with health screenings and referral services as well as provide health and psychosocial information via an Mdm hotline.
- In Serbia, UNICEF organised a segment on the promotion of immunization services in the time of COVID-19 by key epidemiologists during the "RTS and UNICEF for parents" morning TV shows.
- In Turkmenistan, to avoid vaccine stock-outs, UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry (MOHMI) on ongoing supply and logistics to ensure prioritization of immunization shipments and on actions and ensure adequate

cold chain is in place.

- In Ukraine, UNICEF Ukraine issued [a joint press release](#) with WHO on risks related to suspension of vaccination. UNICEF has conducted an analysis of availability of vaccines to avoid stock-outs in the context of the delayed state procurement for the budget of 2020.
- In Uzbekistan, UNICEF supported the development and use of the National Guideline on Management of Children with COVID-19 with the Republican Specialized Scientific Practical Centre of Paediatrics. Social media channels were used to disseminate messages on safe immunization of children, to parents and caregivers, and on HIV-prevention to young people.

Infection, Protection and Control (IPC)/WASH Services: please see “Supplies” (page 5) for an update on distribution of WASH related supplies. As well:

- In Croatia, UNICEF’s implementing partner Médecins du Monde (Mdm) provided support in minimising risk of infection in the reception facility where 440 asylum seekers are accommodated, including 90 children. As of May, Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Health will take over and fully fund all health services provided in the reception centre by Mdm.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE): UNICEF-produced/supported campaigns on immunization (e.g., Albania, Armenia, Kosovo*, Kyrgyzstan, Italy, Serbia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan) and parenting (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Croatia, Italy, Romania, Ukraine) stood out this week among the many key messages (often translated and localized from global content) reaching millions of people via print, web, social media and TV channels. For example, in Bulgaria, local adaptation of global communication materials on antenatal care reached 1.1 million people. National celebrities (Azerbaijan, Kosovo*) featured prominently, and contributed to the high level of views and engagement, particularly around campaigns such as #LearnAtHome and other child-focused initiatives. In Turkey social media channels achieved a reach of 30 million people, including vulnerable refugee, migrant and Turkish men, women and children—with a total engagement of around 100,000 people. The high reach is due in part to Facebook optimizing UNICEF content to raise awareness around the pandemic

- In Armenia, social media participation from the anti-vaccine community members provided UNICEF with unique insights that will inform the work to overcome vaccine hesitancy, knowledge gaps and misinformation that need to be addressed. The Immunization Master Class (global) [video](#) had a reach of 42,600.
- In Kosovo*, UNICEF developed a social media campaign on COVID-19 from the perspective of children living with disabilities. Videos used signed language, and the participation of famous personalities and talents helped generate interest.
- In Tajikistan, UNICEF coordinated with the Ministry of Health in providing surge support to help government to roll-out digital communication on COVID-19 this week. This short- term intervention will include establishing an official COVID-19 website, chatbots and social media monitoring.
- In Ukraine, UNICEF and partners (including TV and other media outlets) scaled up [a solidarity campaign](#) #ThankYouDoctor (дякуюлікаря) in support of healthcare and other frontline workers. Over 50 celebrities and opinion leaders shared their personal stories of gratitude.

Engaging Adolescents and Young People: Outreach to young people reflects a wide array of partnerships with Government and youth organizations, and with young people themselves. Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are among the most popular platforms for engagement. In addition, young people are voicing opinions and engaging with each other on U-Report. Youth focused skills-building initiatives have totally converted to on-line platforms, with very positive results and, in many ways, reaffirmed the leadership expressed by voice of youth.

- In Azerbaijan, risk communication messages were disseminated via a joint initiative between UNICEF, the Ministry of Youth and Sports through 11 Youth Houses and the National Association of Youth Organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan (NAYORA) as key dissemination platform. Local NGO partners implementing the joint UNICEF-European Union initiative on community-based services have also continued contributing to the COVID-19 response. Junior Achievement Azerbaijan (JAA) conducted online Training of Trainers for specialists of six Youth Houses and Youth Development and Career Centres, followed by online trainings on career orientation for 112 (73 female and 39 male) young participants from six districts.
- In Bulgaria, UNICEF successfully launched U-Report in a digital event, livestreamed on [Facebook](#).
- In Croatia, young people participated in the third session of [youth and mental health global webinar series](#) organized by the UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, in partnership with UNICEF and WHO..

- In Italy, the first ever virtual [Activate Talk](#) was held online simultaneously on the U Report on the Move and UNICEF National Committee (NatCom) Facebook pages. Focusing on young people’s digital engagement during COVID-19, the Activate talk show cased UNICEF’s and key partners (ARCI/UNHCR, UNICEF Italian National Committee volunteers, ScuolaZoo) work, whilst simultaneously highlighting increasing inequalities and risks related to the ongoing digital divide. Through the Active Citizenship pilot, a first poll on the impact of COVID-19 on adolescent and young people’s well-being was launched in Palermo municipality, reaching a wide range of Italian citizens, migrants and refugees.
- In Kazakhstan, during the reporting period, UNICEF engaged online volunteers who in turn reached 35,800 young peers with social media posts on how to maintain positive spirit and take care of mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- In Kyrgyzstan, adolescents’ online consultations took place with youth for the provision of innovative solutions to the COVID-19 Emergency. From April 26th to 29th, an online consultation was held with adolescents aiming to better understand the concerns of adolescents and young people in relation to COVID-19 Emergency situation and to promote their participation by asking them to develop their own innovative solutions to these issues. As a result, 32 proposals were submitted and four of them will be funded and 12 will receive UNICEF technical support.
- In Montenegro, through the #StayAtHome initiative, UNICEF launched the new #StrpljenSpasen (“all things come to the one who wait”) social media campaigns promoting physical distancing among young people. In addition, the first round of the #StudyBuddy initiative – which matches adolescents for peer support for homework and study – took place with young people expressing strong satisfaction.
- In North Macedonia, UNICEF finalized a “volunteering in the time of COVID-19” design workshop, where young volunteers designed volunteering initiatives. The first, a social media campaign #SadiSiDoma was launched, promoting emotional wellbeing under lockdown.
- In Serbia, over 20,000 adolescents were reached and engaged through the #VolunteersOnTheNet (#VolonteriNaMreži). 430 adolescents and young people were engaged in online volunteering activities in partnership with Young Researchers of Serbia, to help their peers during home isolation and promote COVID-19 safety, including among young people living with disabilities, whose stories were published on [U-Report](#).
- In Ukraine, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) conducted the U-Report poll on the access and quality of distance learning among the school-aged children. The poll showed that more than half of U-reporters use online tools. Sixty-six per cent of U-reporters reported increased workload and 70% stated to have managed to organize themselves for distant learning. About 61% of the respondents do not like their current mode of distant learning.
- In Uzbekistan, awareness raising messages on prevention and myths related to COVID-19 were disseminated through U-Report platform. Currently the platform brings together 65,000 U-Reporters.

Access to Continuous Learning: UNICEF ECAR activities to ensure continuous learning, when regular lessons have been temporarily suspended, focus on building capacity and resources needed by teachers. For example, the LearnIN initiative is already providing technical assistance via webinar to teachers and policy makers in Albania, demonstrating a strong collaboration between, UNICEF, teachers, Ministry of Education (MoE), the National institute for Teacher Training, universities, and education NGOs. This week focused on supporting students to prevent them dropping out. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the initiative was adopted in collaboration with the education authorities in Sarajevo and Canon, connecting teachers to experts in the area of pedagogy, EdTech, and government, administration and quality of online education. As well:

- In Armenia, a partnership with the National Centre for Education Technologies (NCET) was established to accelerate the production of video-lessons that are being broadcasted on national and local TV and digital skills of teachers. Simultaneously NCET and the Ministry drafted e-school concept note and action plan to approach other donors for scaling up distance learning interventions. According the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (MoESCS) latest data, around 85% of schoolchildren have access to distance learning via TV programme, YouTube education channel and NCET education platform. The TV lessons are now available in Armenian sign language for children with hearing impairments.
- In Croatia, UNICEF supported the Croatian educational system by procuring a Tape Library solution valued at \$70,000. It was procured to strengthen the Internet Server used for virtual classrooms by all Croatian teachers and students.
- In Greece, as part of its ongoing partnership with Greek universities building capacity of both formal and non-formal teachers, UNICEF ensured mother tongue language learning materials were available on the Teach 4 Integration platform (at the request of MoE), which has been widely shared with partners.

- In Turkey, UNICEF and partners developed and shared (via social media) additional resources for teachers, parents, caregivers and children interested in supplemental learning and skills development. These resources—in Turkish and Arabic—function as personalized means of learning for different age groups and offer practice exercises, thousands of hours of instructional videos, and learning dashboards that empower learners to study at home.
- In Ukraine, UNICEF conducted a webinar “How to organize distance learning for teachers and parents: resources and advice”, which was attended by 321 teachers and parents who learned how to use online technologies and tools to facilitate home learning. The UNICEF supported an annual education conference “EdCamp” and conducted a webinar through a partner, attended by over 850 preschool teachers and administrators, on how to talk with pre-schoolers about COVID-19 focused on building skills in facilitating learning and development activities at home.

UNICEF focus was very much concentrated on enabling students to learn online. For example:

- In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNICEF provided internet access to 1,968 children in Republika Srpska to ensure their learning continuity.
- In Croatia, UNICEF, in cooperation with Arena Centre and Tele2 and the MoES, distributed 100 tablets and SIM cards, primarily for Roma children from 52 schools across Croatia who do not have internet access.
- In Greece, where the Ministry of Education has now included all lyceums and gymnasiums on the online learning platform (primary schools are expected to have access to the platform this week) 700,000 students and 166,000 teachers are already registered. UNICEF and partners as well as the Education Sector Working Group have simplified and translated registration guidelines into 10 languages to support the registration of 1,506 refugee and migrant children. UNICEF distributed 228 homework packages to school-age children in Open Accommodation Sites. UNICEF partner, Solidarity Now, provided remote education support to 559 beneficiaries in the quarantined sites of Malakasa and Ritsona through an online platform. An updated off-line version of the Akelius language learning platform was made available on Google Play. Learning material using refugees’ mother tongue languages have been uploaded on a new section of the [teach4integration](#) web page and widely shared with partners to support self-learning.
- In Kyrgyzstan, UNICEF provided technical support to develop a series for a TV broadcast in Kyrgyz and Russian languages for pre-school children, including children with disabilities. The office also supported the development of TV/video/paper instructions for parents on learning at home.
- In Montenegro, in collaboration with the Red Cross of Montenegro initiative, UNICEF supported printed education materials that were distributed to most of the municipalities supporting 245 Roma and Egyptian children. This fills a crucial gap as many Roma children were not able to access the distance learning system (#UciDoma) due to lack of access to a TV or the internet.
- In Turkey, Syrian and vulnerable Turkish families across the Southeast received daily phone calls or WhatsApp messages from a network of more than 200 teachers containing instructions and guidance on three key early-learning activities—benefitting over 5,200 young children.
- In Ukraine, UNICEF issued [a joint press release](#) with Ministry of Education and Presidential Office about launch of TV lessons for primary school students and sign language adaptation supported by UNICEF in partnership with Ukrainian media company Megogo.

Access to Child Protection and Preventing Violence emphasizes actions to protect the safety of the most vulnerable children and women. For example:

- In Azerbaijan, with support of UNICEF and EU, volunteers of the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, delivered basic food items, hygiene and risk communication materials to families with children returning from care institutions and children with disabilities benefitted from this support.
- In Bulgaria UNICEF, via Child Advocacy Centres (CaCs) continued to provide psychosocial support for children and parent. Training on gender based violence (GBV) has been completed for frontline workers and partners. Survivors and at-risk individuals from the refugee and migrant community have been able to access UNICEF-supported GBV services in Sofia and Harmanli.
- In Croatia, UNICEF agreed with Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy to provide support to social welfare professionals in capacity building of professionals on conducting online mediation in cases of high-conflict divorces when there is a dispute among parents on the visitation rights due to restriction of movement. UNICEF will also provide training

of professionals on conducting play therapy for children who are in isolation in residential care institutions, as well as in provision of mental health support to frontline professionals in dealing with increased professional and personal /family stressors. UNICEF is keen to focus on women professionals who are at heightened pressure due to gender roles, unpaid care work, etc.

- In Greece, UNICEF finalised a set of guidelines for GBV shelter providers on prevention and preparedness for COVID-19 in close collaboration with the Gender Secretariat on Family Policy & Gender Equality (GSFPGE).
- In Georgia, in partnership with the Parliament and State Care Agency, [a new child hotline 111](#) became operational on 24 April. A Facebook page to support parents of children with disabilities through the provision of information 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 have reached an estimated 1,000 people.
- In Italy, UNICEF continued to provide support to partners in order to ensure the remote continuation of GBV prevention and response activities. Case management, counselling and psychosocial support was provided to GBV survivors, individuals at risk and migrant and refugee children. The GBV Pocket Guide, a global tool which provides a step-by-step guidance to non-GBV specialists in handling GBV disclosure, was adapted to the Italian context. This is a key resource during COVID-19 outbreak to increase the capacity of frontline responders.
- In Kazakhstan, the coordination meeting of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) took place on 28 April which raised issues related to remote monitoring of closed institutions, including childcare institutions. Online remote monitoring under the National Preventive Mechanism was conducted in East Kazakhstan to monitor the human rights situation and response measures under the COVID-19.
- In Kyrgyzstan, UNICEF supported the delivery of online psychosocial support for children of 750 families who were left behind by parents or caregivers who have migrated.
- In Kosovo*, UNICEF, Ombudsperson Institution of Kosovo*, KOMF (Coalition of Child Protection NGOs.) and EU office agreed to jointly advocate for the temporary release of juveniles in conflict with the law who are placed in pretrial detention, detention and Correctional Institutions during the period of COVID-19.
- In Montenegro, UNICEF supported the Association of Youth with Disabilities in providing psychosocial and legal support to children with disabilities and their families through an [online platform](#). Since the launch of service provision, 60 families have been supported.
- In Serbia, UNICEF has initiated child protection psychosocial support for children in residential care. This project will strengthen resilience through capacity building of professional staff and establishing mechanisms for direct engagement of children into structured creative, peer-volunteering and psychosocial support activities.
- In Tajikistan, UNICEF has prioritized the safety of children residential care institutions. UNICEF along with the EU are providing learning equipment.
- In Turkey, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Turkish Red Crescent, continued to distribute psychosocial support (PSS) kits (including activity books, art supplies and toys) to 5,000 vulnerable families in the provinces of Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Hatay, Mersin and Adana. The kits are intended to support children who were formerly accessing community-based PSS services at UNICEF supported child protection centres. UNICEF worked with partners to ensure the continuation of community-based child protection services where possible by using alternative communication channels and approaches, including email, text messaging, online chat, or mobile phone—reaching 22,572 children and their families with remote counselling and 8,612 individuals (including 5,350 children) with case management.
- In Ukraine, UNICEF began supporting the national toll-free child helpline to address violence related concerns and enabling children, adolescents, and youth to receive psychological counselling or be referred to other service providers, if needed.
- In Uzbekistan, UNICEF provided technical assistance to the National University of Uzbekistan to develop and introduce a new course module on Social Work in Humanitarian Crisis which incorporates examples of psychosocial support interventions during the COVID19 outbreak. The course will be tested and integrated into the curriculum of the University's Department of Social Work.

Social Protection: UNICEF is supporting governments dealing with sudden mass loss of livelihoods as a result of forced quarantine and physical distancing measures. Building resilience into national social assistance systems is often in partnership

with other UN agencies, International Financial Institutions, and academia.

- In Azerbaijan, UNICEF worked with social workers to help heads of vulnerable families access a lump-sum payment of AZN 190 (\$112) provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population.
- In Kosovo*, UNICEF and the World Bank collaborated to support the Government in extending its fiscal relief package to support families with children with severe disabilities and those participating in the foster care scheme.
- In Turkey, UNICEF and NGO partner Development Workshop (DW) raised awareness among state, civil society and private sector stakeholders on the vulnerabilities of seasonal agricultural worker families—many of whom are refugees and migrants. The interventions advocated for conditions that will enable agricultural production to continue while safeguarding the rights and well-being of working families. Drawing on field research and global good practices, three different types of kits customized to the specific needs of children and families in seasonal agriculture were developed. UNICEF NGO partner Support to Life provided children and families at risk of child labour remote case management, awareness raising, and counselling services through phone calls and messaging platforms. Nearly 1,000 families accessed the Support to Life Information and Support Hotline, which operates across multiple languages.
- In Ukraine, high-level advocacy for immediate extraordinary social protection measures, including possibility of temporary universal payment to all households with children following new projections on child poverty continued. UNICEF also continued its advocacy on evidence-based social protection measures in the context of COVID-19, which resulted in a child poverty report being published in one of the most recognized Ukrainian newsletters. UNICEF's Facebook post on "Seven recommendations on social protection to Government" gathered almost 500,000 views.

Data Collection Analysis and Research

Examples of data collection analysis and research have been embedded in the sections above, as relevant to the area of programme.

Internal and External Media

WEBSITE (English & Russian)

- [\[RO\] ECA Region COVID-19 webpage](#)
- [\[Italy/RO's "Our Voices" youth blogs series\]](#) [Haroun, from Senegal, volunteers for the COVID-19 response in Italy](#)
- [\[Italy\] Staying apart but connected during COVID-19](#)
- [\[Serbia\] UNICEF, Red Cross and USAID providing vital support for children and families in response to COVID-19](#)
- [\[RO\] Relocation and integration of UAC from Greece to other EU Member States – Guiding principles & approaches](#)
- [\[RO translations, global\]](#)
 - [New guidelines include roadmap for safe school opening \(original\)](#)
 - [Greta Thunberg and NGO Human Act launch a child rights driven coronavirus campaign for UNICEF \(original\)](#)
 - [Future of 370 mln children in jeopardy as school closures deprive them of school meals \(original\)](#)
 - [Immunization and COVID-19: what parents should know \(original\)](#)
 - [6 ways parents can support their kids through the COVID-19 outbreak](#)
 - [8 tips to help comfort and protect children](#)

More information available on [Stories from the region](#), [Press centre](#), and ["Our Voices"](#)

TWITTER

- [\[Greece, RT\] COVID-19 a further risk to child education](#)
- [\[Italy/RO's "Our Voices" youth blogs series\]](#) [Haroun, from Senegal, volunteers for the COVID-19 response in Italy](#)
- [\[Serbia, RT\] Delivery of hygiene supplies to a Roma settlement](#)
- [\[Turkey, RT\] Family kits to help parents during the lockdown](#)
- [\[Tajikistan, RT\] #Vaccines are every child's right](#)
- [\[Tajikistan, RT\] Danya, Anisa, Nisso, Soro and Doro explain how to stay protected from infections](#)
- [\[Tajikistan, RT\] Providing Ministry of Health with essential medical supplies and training, with Swiss gov't support](#)
- [\[Ukraine\] With EU/ECHO support, UNICEF helps the most vulnerable, like Daryna, access education](#)
- [\[Ukraine\] With EU/ECHO support, UNICEF helps create a safe school environment for #ChildrenUnderAttack](#)
- [\[RO\] #COVID19 reveals what is at stake when we don't have the protective shield of immunization](#)
- [\[RO\] Immunization message](#)
- [\[RO\] Routine immunization programmes are more critical than ever](#)

- [RO] [#VaccinesWork](#) post
- [RO] [Trusting the expertise of doctors when they urge parents to vaccinate children against diseases that remain a very real threat to children](#)
- [RO] [Relocation and integration of UAC from Greece to other EU Member States – Guiding principles & approaches](#)
- [RO] [Joining @openbudgets call for increased budget transparency / release of @openbudgets survey 2019](#)
- [Global, RT] [Four tips from @MarieKondo for students](#)
- [Global, RT] [#VaccinesWork](#)

FACEBOOK (Russian)

- [Armenia/RO's "Our Voices" youth blogs series] [Youth blog on climate change](#)
- [Ukraine, with Kazakhstan and RO] [Facebook Live with psychologist from Ukraine](#)
- [RO] World Immunization Week: [post](#), [post](#), [post](#), [post](#)
- [RO] [Maintaining routine immunization vital - statement](#)
- [RO] [COVID-19 and people with HIV video](#)
- [RO translation, global] [Immunization and COVID: what parents should know](#)
[Children deprived of school meals](#)
[6 tips for parents to help children cope with COVID](#)
[How to protect children online?](#)

INSTAGRAM (Russian)

- [RO] World Immunization week: [post](#), [post](#), [post](#), [post](#)
- [RO] [Education tips for learning at home](#)
- [RO] [Children deprived of school meals](#)
- [RO] [How to talk to children about coronavirus](#)
- [RO] [Myths about coronavirus](#)
- [RO] [How coronavirus spreads](#)

Next Sitrep: 15 May 2020

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Annex I: Summary of Selected Regional Programme Results (as of 30 April 2020)³

Areas of Response	2020 Target	Total UNICEF results	% Target achieved
Risk Communication and Community Engagement			
Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services	103,800,000	60,725,224	59%
Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions	6,080,500	2,443,822	40%
Critical Supply and Logistics and WASH Services			
Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services	2,971,620	123,740 ⁴	4%
Number of healthcare workers within health facilities and communities provided with personal protective equipment (PPE)	180,250	54,888	30%
Provision of Healthcare and Nutrition Services			
Number of caregivers of children (0-23 months) reached with messages on breastfeeding	1,004,513	258,275	26%
Access to Continuous Education and Child Protection Services			
Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning	38,220,424	5,578,666	15%
Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements	6,435	80 ⁵	1%
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support	197,694	34,877	18%
Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation & referrals for survivors, including for PSEA	5,259	273	5%
Access to Social Protection Services			
Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian multi-sector cash grant	296,981	40,000	13%

³ This table presents the Regional programme indicators which have been selected from the global Humanitarian Performance Monitoring (HPM) framework. The reported programme results have been extracted from the global HPM dashboard for the period ending 30 April. Following the recent HAC revisions, in subsequent Sitreps targets and indicators may be subject to some revision to better report on regional dynamics and nuances in the context of COVID-19 response.

⁴ In many countries, UNICEF is in the process of scaling-up interventions in this area, beyond NFI distributions to cover WASH services. This is an important area of support for which additional funding is required.

⁵ During the current reporting period, the definition of the indicator has been adjusted to focus specifically on COVID-affected children and therefore the reported result has been adjusted accordingly. Assuring support for these protection services is an important niche for the region since a significant number of all children in institutions around the world are in ECAR.