

Update on UNICEF Humanitarian Action

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Update on UNICEF humanitarian action:
The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic
Reference document: [UNICEF/2021/EB/3](#)

Global overview of COVID-19 situation & impact

1. As of 11 January, over 90 million COVID-19 cases and 1.9 million deaths officially reported in 215 countries and territories globally.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered an unprecedented global health, humanitarian, socioeconomic and human rights crisis.
3. Significant interruption in provision of basic services globally:
 - a. There has been a 30 per cent reduction in global coverage of essential nutrition services.
 - b. At least 55 vaccine-preventable disease campaigns in 31 countries were postponed.
 - c. School closures affected nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries.
 - d. Health- and nutrition-related service closures are expected to lead to increased child morbidity and mortality over the medium to long term.
4. Public health measures heightened protection risks and vulnerabilities for already at-risk groups.
5. The number of children living in multidimensional poverty has soared to approximately 1.2 billion.

UNICEF’s response strategy & key results in coordination with WHO and partners

Priority 1: Support the public health response to reduce transmission and mortality

Intervention	UNICEF’s response & key results
Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)	RCCE: Over 3 billion people reached with RCCE interventions in 2020. WHO/IFRC/UNICEF coalition & collaboration on RCCE.
Infection prevention and control	<p>Training of front-line health workers: 3.4 million health care workers trained in infection prevention and control (IPC)</p> <p>Provision of supplies to health centres & essential service locations: 2.1 million health workers provided with PPE.</p> <p>Access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services and supplies: 92 million reached with WASH supplies</p>
Data collection and social research	Studies, surveys and data collection in multiple countries, with the findings informing the response.

UNICEF’s response strategy & key results in coordination with WHO and partners

Priority 2: Respond to the immediate socioeconomic impacts (and going forward the longer-term impacts) of the COVID-19 pandemic through continuity of basic services.

Intervention	UNICEF’s response & key results
Adaptation of service provision	Supporting adaptation of services to ensure continuity of essential services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 78.3 million children and women reached with essential health-care services in UNICEF-supported facilities - 274 million children supported with distance/home-based learning - 75 million children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community-based mental health and psychosocial services (MHPSS)
Continued & increased support to national systems and services	Providing technical, financial, capacity building, trainings and other support to national structures and systems to ensure the safe continuation of basic services and to help combat COVID-19 and transmission.

Priority 3: Advocacy

Intervention	UNICEF’s response & key results
Advocacy	Establish the COVID-19 pandemic as a child rights crisis and work to protect years of progress already made and to protect the most marginalized.

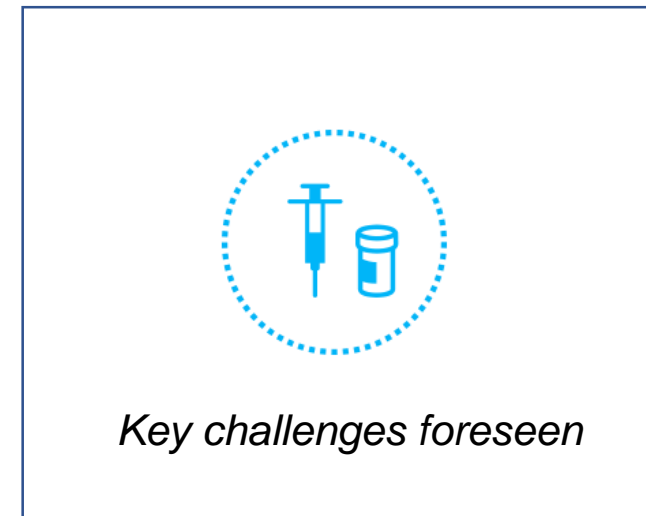
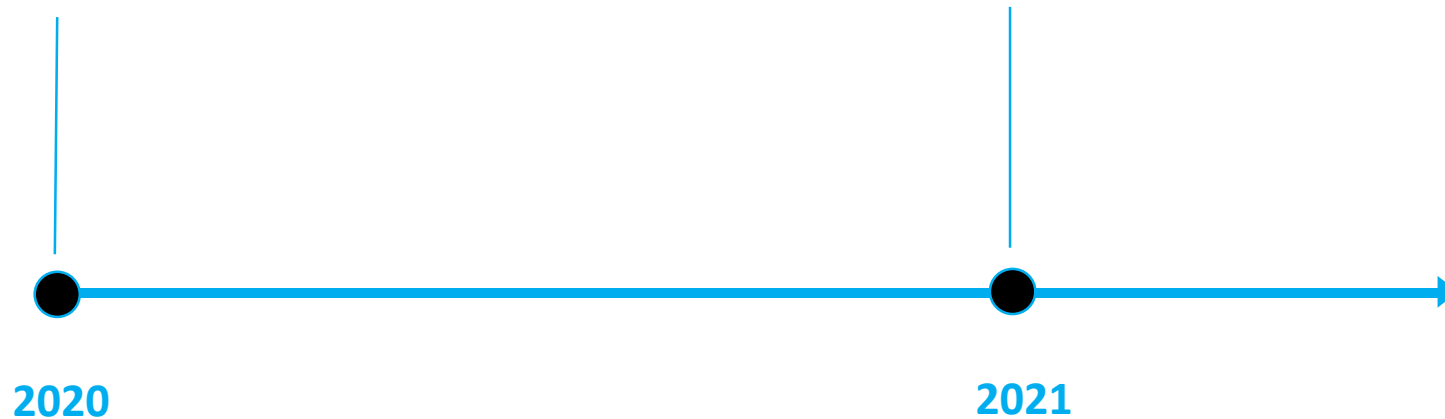
Priority 4: Supporting the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator partnership

UNICEF's responsibilities/role in ACT-A & in the 2021 COVID-19 vaccine roll-out

UNICEF is engaged across all three ACT-A pillars (**Diagnostics; Therapeutics; Vaccines - COVAX**) and supports the Health Systems Connector.

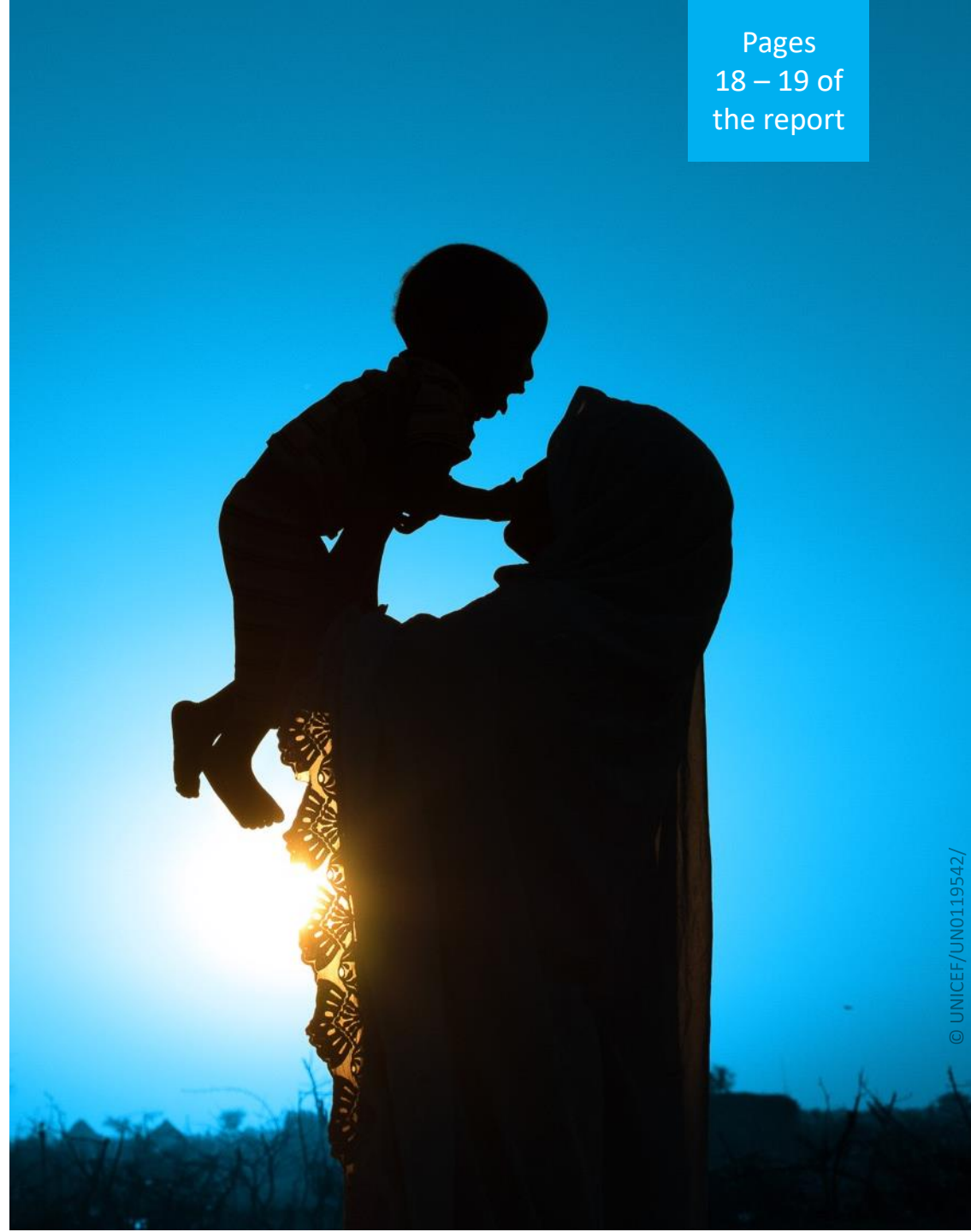
UNICEF is the designated procurement coordinator and co-leads the COVAX country readiness and delivery workgroups.

UNICEF procures and delivers new diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines and ensures country preparedness for the roll-out.



Key challenges faced & measures taken to overcome them

1. Confronting **unprecedented logistical challenges**.
2. Responding with **limited humanitarian access** and challenges faced by staff and partners in implementation and monitoring of programmes.
3. Protecting the **continuity, utilization and safety of vital basic services**.
4. Establishing the **centrality of protection** in the COVID-19 response.
5. Addressing the **digital divide**.
6. The **scale of the crisis** was significant, affecting all countries globally.
7. Mobilizing **flexible funding**.
8. Prioritizing response efforts on the **socioeconomic and other impacts** that the pandemic was having on children.



Key lessons learned

1. Prioritizing risk communication and community engagement
2. Working through local responders
3. Using technology to enhance programme delivery and monitoring
4. Leveraging UNICEF emergency systems and humanitarian-development linkages
5. Opportunity to maximize the new levels of engagement with social protection
6. Generating quality data and evidence in real-time for decision-making
7. | [UNICEF Executive Board](#) – Informal briefing
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Thank you.

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