UNICEF Lebanon Programming Priorities 2020

APRIL 2020 | 3-6 months

Overview

Lebanon is facing an unprecedented crisis scenario where the COVID-19 pandemic has brought additional challenges on top of the economic crisis already affecting the country, especially the most vulnerable children and their families, before the COVID outbreak.

COVID-19 has increased the humanitarian needs of communities, camps and informal settlements across Lebanon.

UNICEF is adjusting its strategies to expand its reach to the most vulnerable girls, boys and young people by scaling-up programmes and focusing on three STRATEGIC PRIORITIES in support of the economic and COVID responses with the Government, WHO, other UN agencies, the private sector and civil society nationally and at the community level.

UNICEF is targeting up to 5.8 million people of which 37% are children; including an estimated 1.4 million vulnerable girls, boys and their families.

Priority 1

Technical support to public health response to reduce COVID-19 transmission and mortality

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

Coordination mechanisms led by UNICEF with government ministries including MoPH, MoIM and Ministry of Information as well as the DRM; municipalities, CSO, NGOs, WHO, other UN agencies, inter-religious groups and academic institutions are multiplying the efforts to reach the population and the most vulnerable communities with life-saving information. Massive dissemination of videos and other communication materials are reaching an average three million people through the media, social media and public spaces to ensure that the correct information about COVID-19 and the protection measures reach a wide audience. Besides, training sessions are targeting 2,762 non-health actors from governmental institutions, CSO, syndicates and unions, security forces and scouts to strengthen knowledge and skills on the prevention measures, self-isolation and protection of sick people. Community engagement activities include technical guidance and coordination with DRM and MoIM to support municipalities and local authorities to bring social and behavioral change, and strengthen the capacities for coordination and referral of essential services to vulnerable mild COVID cases in isolation at home or municipal isolation shelters.

Borders and infection prevention and control (IPC)

UNICEF is providing support at five land borders by enrolling, training and equipping nurses for screening, isolation and referral of suspected cases as well as supporting continued immunization services for every child crossing the border. A key support area is the training, procurement, dispatch and use of infection prevention and control supplies and personal protective equipment and technical support to frontline workers in PHCs, Flu Clinics, municipalities, and isolation shelters; as well as for affected individuals and others such as public schools, TVET schools, SDCs, informal settlements, camps, overcrowded and poor urban settings.

Technical support in case management, follow up and surveillance

UNICEF’s primary technical support is focused on women and children (including the areas of gender and disability) to ensure that case management is adapted to them and supports the implementation of breastfeeding recommendations and nutrition support; and that they have continued access to essential health care services including immunization, prenatal and postnatal care, and gender-based violence (GBV) response care. UNICEF is working with communities on the prevention of exclusion and stigmatization, surveillance of asymptomatic or mild cases in self-isolation, and to support cases in quarantine shelters and for recovery cases when they return to households. Technical support to Primary Health Care Centers, Flu Clinics and community networks to secure health care access for suspected cases or contacts are also part of UNICEF’s response to COVID-19.
**Priority 2**

Support to specific COVID-19 services and continuity of health, education/learning, youth development, child protection, water and sanitation, and other social services

**Integrated community health response in vulnerable municipalities**

UNICEF is providing technical guidance to municipalities to help coordinate an integrated community health response for those individuals with a mild form of COVID and their families with support coming from PHCs, Flu Clinics, SDCs, isolation shelters, civil society and others. Key activities are also related to the disinfection of public spaces and institutions and support to patients in isolation shelters and self-isolation. This support includes social assistance, psycho-social support, special precautions relating to age, gender and disability, parental care, IPC supplies, personal protective equipment, WASH facilities, medical waste and guidance and sensitizing activities to prevent stigma.

**Continuation of critical services with precautionary measures**

UNICEF has strengthened its support to reduce risks of COVID-19 transmission and ensure continued access to essential basic services and social assistance to girls, boys, young people and their families. Some essential services include WASH activities such as water tankering and desludging, distribution of soap and disinfection products and sensitization visits to all households in informal settlements and vulnerable families living in poor urban settings. Community health is supported by the contribution of routine immunization and basic health services for newborn, child, adolescent and pregnant women. UNICEF also ensures child protection and gender violence services, and provides support to distance and remote learning, parental engagement with their children and preparedness for re-entry into schools and non-formal education programmes.

**Priority 3**

Expansion support to vulnerable population groups, including children and their families, in need of urgent social assistance

**Social assistance**

UNICEF is providing immediate technical support to the government to provide social assistance to targeted low-income families in urgent need due to the worsening economic crisis and COVID-19. Further activities include short-term bridging support for Lebanese households with children and caregivers with disability, and technical assistance for the development of a 2-3 year hybrid social assistance programme linked to a long-term social protection policy framework.

**Community/youth cash-for-work supported initiatives**

Through an innovative approach through community and youth-led initiatives, UNICEF will provide social assistance to vulnerable families not directly affected by COVID-19. Women, adolescents and the youth will be supported to generate income from community engagement activities (for example, cooking, sewing materials for vulnerable groups, hospitals and clinics) and agricultural initiatives to support low-income households and municipalities.