In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and political upheaval inflicted a double crisis upon Kyrgyzstan, threatening to roll back hard-won development gains and significantly affect the situation of children. After the first registered COVID-19 cases in March, the Government declared a national emergency. Cases surged dramatically in June, peaking at nearly 1,300 daily cases in July[1] – one of the highest global per capita ratios. Unable to cope with the massive number of people seeking testing and treatment, health care services were stretched to their limits. Due to weak infection prevention and control, in July, 25 per cent of confirmed cases were among health workers. By the end of 2020, there were over 80,000 cumulative cases and over 1,300 deaths registered in Kyrgyzstan.[2]

Beyond the immediate health impacts, the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic are significant. Kyrgyzstan's real gross domestic product declined by 8.6 per cent in 2020.[3] The World Bank estimates that the poverty rate could increase to 44 per cent – up from 20.1 per cent in 2019 – due to declines in remittances, falling incomes, growing unemployment, rising prices and increased health expenditures.[4] According to preliminary results of the phone-based follow up MICS survey, 50 per cent of households reported a reduction in income, and one fifth reported challenges in accessing healthcare services.[5]

Even before the COVID-19 crisis, every fourth child in Kyrgyzstan lived in monetary poverty and every second child experienced multidimensional deprivations. Based on a World Bank-UNICEF study conducted in May, the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 could see the number of children living in poverty increasing by 160,000-570,000 (or up to 55 per cent),[6] severely impacting on the nutrition, health and development prospects of future generations.

School closures have affected all 1.6 million school-aged children in Kyrgyzstan. While the education system swiftly rolled out remote learning, it has also brought concerns about the quality of education and students’ mental health. More than 60 per cent of adolescents are experiencing high levels of pandemic-related anxiety.[7] A lack of adequate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities and safety measures in schools hampered timely school reopening.[8]

Some 20,000 children under two risk missing out on essential vaccines.[9] Children and adolescent girls face increased risk of malnutrition due to deteriorating dietary intake, anaemia and micro-nutrient deficiencies.

During lockdown, nearly 86 per cent of children living in residential institutions returned to their families – a unique opportunity to advance de-institutionalization reform. These families need support to keep their children at home.[10] Children of migrants are affected by declines in remittances. Gender-based violence/domestic violence cases increased by 65 per cent in early 2020. Child Helpline calls tripled compared to last year, demonstrating a rise in cases of violence against children.

The pandemic and the ensuing lockdown also highlighted the authorities’ limited ability to mobilize an effective response. Changes to key officials during the pandemic - including the Prime Minister, the Vice Prime Minister for Social Affairs, and the Minister of Health - further inhibited crisis response. Gaps in access to healthcare and services led to an impressive mobilization of volunteers; predominantly young people offered invaluable support during the COVID-19 crisis by directly assisting patients treated at home and medical staff in hospitals.

Following parliamentary elections in October, primarily young protesters took to the streets to contest
the results and demand change. The turmoil led to the annulment of election results, resignation of President Jeenbekov and a change of Government. Former politician Sadyr Japarov was freed from prison during the riots and appointed acting Prime Minister, then, in a matter of days, acting President. The outgoing Parliament is operating in a caretaker capacity until the new Parliamentary elections. In this context of political uncertainty, with high turnover of staff in key institutions, space for the UN system to pursue the development agenda became very limited. Following the visit of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Central Asia, the UN and the provisional Government issued a joint statement of intent in which the UN commits to supporting peace, stability and development in Kyrgyzstan, cooperating with the Government to chart a path to sustainable, inclusive and long-term recovery.

2021 promises to be equally uncertain, as it will take time to reset the political system. Presidential elections and a referendum on the governance system took place on 10 January 2021. With a turnout of 40 per cent, Sadyr Japarov won with nearly 80 per cent of votes. Around 80 per cent also voted in favor of a presidential system. A new constitution must be developed and approved, with parliamentary elections due in mid-2021. Prolonged political uncertainty and COVID-19’s effects on both the socioeconomic situation and social services present further risks. If not well-managed, these risks could spiral into further public discontent and social unrest.

Meanwhile, air pollution in Kyrgyzstan (PM2.5), especially in Bishkek, reached hazardous levels during the winter, primarily due to coal burning. In November-December, Bishkek frequently featured as the most polluted city in the World’s Air Quality ranking.[11] This trend threatens to compound COVID-induced respiratory issues and carries long-term health implications for the population, especially children.


Major contributions and drivers of results

UNICEF rapidly adapted to the growing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Existing programming was adjusted where possible to manage the primary and secondary impacts of COVID-19 and ensure that the response did not negate sustained results and routine service delivery for the most vulnerable. UNICEF continued to support the Government to create an enabling environment for women and children and develop robust systems for quality service delivery. Evidence generation was used to demonstrate good practices for inclusion and social protection.
Despite the challenges posed by the impact of COVID-19, the ability to quickly mobilize action from Government and Development partners has also been an opportunity for accelerated programming, especially in digitalisation and technology.

Technical support on child rights legislation and regulatory processes continued from 2019 and became even more relevant during the COVID-19 response. UNICEF's extensive support to the Government's first-ever Voluntary National Review report to the UN High-level Political Forum provided a platform to assess progress against the Sustainable Development Goals and advocate for the child rights agenda.

This section summarises UNICEF Kyrgyzstan's achievements in priority sectors and cross-cutting areas against the Country Programme and the targets sets for 2020. The achievements are grouped around UNICEF's Strategic Plan Goal Areas. The section also considers the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To address the critical health, protection and learning needs of children in the COVID-19 context, UNICEF has been able to mobilize over USD3,000,000 within a short time frame.

**Goal Area 1: Every child survives and thrives**

The healthcare system was the first to experience the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic. As an immediate priority, building on UNICEF’s comparative advantage in global procurement capacity, UNICEF contributed to safe and equitable access to health services through massive procurement of protective equipment (PPE), clinical management equipment, diagnostics, infection prevention and control supplies and essential medicines, all of which benefited to over 10,000 frontline workers. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health (MoH) to develop clinical standards on managing newborns, children, and adolescents with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection. National experts trained more than 3,600 health providers to ensure patients' treatment according to the latest global evidence.

With primary healthcare services overwhelmed by responding to COVID-19, UNICEF support focused also on maintaining and strengthening essential routine health services for women and children; in particular, support for routine immunisation services was provided. UNICEF completed Cold Chain Equipment Optimisation Platform priorities for 2020 by increasing access to specialised refrigeration equipment at vaccine points from 49 to 85 per cent nationwide. This is critical to ensure continued access to vaccines, especially in remote areas. Technical assistance was also provided to maintain home visiting services for newborns through remote communication using smartphone-based technologies.

Likewise, UNICEF continued its support to the Government to maintain quality nutrition services. In particular, recommendations for appropriate breastfeeding and complementary feeding in the COVID-19 context were developed, disseminated and implemented in 105 health facilities. UNICEF also provided technical and financial support for the development of guidelines on Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) and adaptations to IYCF counselling and wasting management in relation to COVID-19.

UNICEF supported the Government to design and implement the National Communication Campaign #Sakta (“Protect”). The campaign united the efforts of the Government, international partners and civil society to raise awareness on COVID-19 preventive measures, debunk myths around the virus, and foster personal and social responsibility via a wide array of channels and media products. An estimated 3,000,000 people received information on COVID-19. During quarantine, targeted communication support was provided to children at risk, including children with disabilities.
The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), with UNICEF’s support, mobilised a comprehensive response to school closures, including preschool, within a relatively short period. In April, UNICEF worked closely with the MoES to develop its first Crisis Response Plan. As co-chair of the Education sector Partners’ Group, UNICEF also coordinated the partners’ response plan in support to the education sector.

UNICEF helped develop remote learning lessons for both preschool and school students, producing a total of 2,637 video lessons (988 for preschool and 1,649 for schools students). UNICEF Volunteers also supported the transcription of 452 video lessons in Russian and Kyrgyz. The acceleration of digital solutions in education demonstrated the latent potential of the MoES to adapt to distance learning opportunities. Partners recognized UNICEF’s previous support to the Government to connect all schools to quality internet within and beyond the country, as part of the GIGA initiative. As of 2020, only 20 schools out of 2,152 do not have internet access due to being located in the most remote and mountainous areas. An electronic library (Ilim Box) which contains up-to-date educational resources that can be accessed offline, has been installed in these schools.

High calibre data to identify children who do not have access to quality education and assess education system bottlenecks remain a major concern in 2020. UNICEF, therefore, continued its support to MOES to establish a functional Education Management Information System (EMIS). In addition to the significant technical assistance provided. UNICEF Volunteers supported the verification of information collected from 2,294 schools and 1,603 pre-schools for EMIS.

Increasing access to Early Childhood Education (ECE) remains a priority to reach the Government’s target of 80 per cent coverage by 2022. Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) commitment translated into the creation of a separate Preschool Department. Continued support to community-based kindergartens and municipal library-based Child Development Centers have provided new opportunities for ECE programmes at scale. With UNICEF’s support, National ECD Standards were approved by the Prime Minister in June 2020 and introduced to local education departments through an online conference. UNICEF prepared a budget brief for the ECD/ECE subsector and presented it to national stakeholders through capacity building workshops.

**Goal Area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation**

Secondary impacts of COVID-19 resulted in a rise of reported cases of child abuse and violence. At the same time, COVID-19 exposed weaknesses in the case management services provided to children and families. To address this, UNICEF accelerated support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) to create a digital case management database for vulnerable children. UNICEF also reached 1,523,654 children and their parents with psychosocial support during COVID-19.

UNICEF helped conduct an analysis of children from residential institutions during the pandemic, which demonstrated that only 13.7 percent of children remained in institutions during the quarantine. Out of 137 facilities, 98 were entirely vacant since children were taken back by their families and relatives. An assessment of the situation of children who had returned home was carried out. The results demonstrated that, with adequate community-based family support, many families would keep their children at home, thereby enabling Kyrgyzstan to fulfil its obligation under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The findings informed ongoing advocacy efforts for childcare system reform and family support to prevent re-institutionalization.

In 2020, amidst the pandemic, UNICEF further consolidated results achieved in the previous years in order to establish an enabling environment for children. The new version of the Child Code, and the accompanying package of 17 law amendments, passed three Parliament Committees and were ready for their first hearing. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and political crisis, the hearing and adoption of the Code were postponed to 2021.
UNICEF completed an analysis of suicides and attempted suicides among adolescents, including those affected by migration. This study will inform further interventions aimed at suicide prevention.

UNICEF and UNHCR developed a Joint Strategy to address childhood statelessness for 2020-2022. As part of the Strategy implementation, both agencies supported the State Registry Service to disseminate information on birth registration procedures to all municipalities. As a result, 130,178 children obtained birth certificates and 43,804 children who reached the age of 16 obtained national passports.

**Goal Area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment**

Based on lessons learnt from UNICEF-supported school-based disaster risk reduction (DRR) project implemented in 121 schools in 2017-2020 that reached 65,000 children, the MOES and the Ministry of Emergency Services developed a roadmap for the national scale-up of this intervention. However, the COVID-19 outbreak and school closures made it impossible to implement school-based DRR activities as planned. UNICEF decided to focus on the capacity building of government and Civil Society partners in child-centred DRR planning and implementation. Previously developed DRR guidelines for school administrations and for municipalities were transformed into 11 video lessons.

Emergency supplies to cover the immediate needs of at least 1,000 families in the event of disasters were procured and pre-positioned. In addition, UNICEF and the Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan (RCSK) conducted humanitarian cash transfer (hCT) pilot exercises in Jalal-Abad, Batken and Naryn provinces. In total, 160 families with children received 4,000 KGS (approx. USD47) per child, according to the minimum subsistence level for one child set by the National Statistics Committee. Using this experience, UNICEF, government and CSO partners are now ready to conduct child-sensitive hCT in case of emergencies.

**Goal Area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life**

Following the institutionalization of National Multidimensional Poverty Measurement in 2019, the National Statistical Committee, with UNICEF’s support, introduced the Multidimensional Child Poverty Index. Routine measurement of monetary child poverty is now complemented by an assessment of deprivations in health, education, living conditions, social inclusion and protection. According to this analysis, 59 per cent of children in Kyrgyzstan suffer from 4 deprivations or more and 6.5 percent of all children are simultaneously deprived in 7 or more indicators.

To inform the response to COVID-19, UNICEF supported an assessment of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on children and families, including a rapid follow-up MICS survey. Joint World Bank-UNICEF analysis on the predicted increase in child poverty informed advocacy and influenced the Government's decision to expand the coverage of the social protection scheme for children by 7 per cent from January to December 2020.

UNICEF supported key government officials in equity-based analysis of several data sources on maternal and child health, nutrition, and immunization, using the Equitable Impact Sensitive Tool (EQUIST).

**Gender responsive programming**

Kyrgyzstan has a challenging track record on gender, including adequately addressing gender-based violence, transforming harmful social norms, and achieving fair representation of women in the public sphere. UNICEF considers enabling policy and government commitments on gender essential for gender transformative results. To this extent, UNICEF supported the development of the National Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2030 and an alternative submission to the Committee on the
Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on critical violations of women’s rights in the country.

A national action plan to prevent child marriage was endorsed in September 2020 to consolidate and strengthen joint efforts in this area. As part of the Spotlight Initiative, UNICEF is conducting monitoring of judicial practice on child marriage cases and developing a C4D roadmap to work in six pilot communities.

Following school closures, the Girls in Science (STEM4Girls) project promptly adapted all capacity building events to an online format. Some 290 girls are now peer-trainers and will lead online learning sessions for their schoolmates on gender equality, gender stereotypes, gender-based violence, child and forced marriages and sexual harassment, choice of profession in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), as well as communication and leadership skills.

UNICEF, as part of the Spotlight Initiative, through an online game, “Spring in Bishkek”, supported an innovative tool to engage and educate youth, and influence their attitudes and behaviours in relation to ala kachuu (bride kidnapping). The game has so far reached over 150,000 people. Feedback from players reflects the relevance of the educational notes and the interesting storyline. Two real cases of ala kachuu were reported on the game’s social media accounts.

Adolescent and youth programming

In the context of the Government-led contest “Youth and Child Friendly Cities”, 18 urban municipalities improved services for children and youth and enabled young people’s participation in local decision-making. A committee chaired by the Vice Prime Minister in charge of social affairs assessed their performance against a set of 26 criteria. As a result, ten municipalities were certified as Child Friendly. The Government issued a decree to extend the Youth and Child Friendly Local Governance (YCFLG) contest for urban municipalities until 31 August 2022, providing an opportunity to conduct another round of the contest. While the exact impact of the YCFLG contest on youth wellbeing is yet to be documented, there is evidence that it has helped cities enable youth participation in decision making. All participating municipalities reported the establishment of youth councils under the mayors’ offices, which participated in planning, budgeting and monitoring municipal projects.

Under another component of YCFLG, 4,200 young people aged between 10-19 years (71 per cent female) in 31 communities, including in areas bordering Uzbekistan, were reached through the UPSHIFT social innovation tool and took part in participatory assessment of issues affecting their wellbeing. Young people participating in the programme reported having gained improved critical thinking and communication skills. The initiative also created better awareness among decision makers on young people’s concerns and demand. Young people developed a total of 190 project proposals. Ninety-four proposals (from 380 young people), focusing on education, protection from violence and the environment, were selected for implementation and received funding from UNICEF. Thirty-six of them received additional financial support from authorities and communities.

At the onset of COVID-19 quarantine, an online UPSHIFT programme engaged a total of 230 young people from 25 cities and villages. They developed 50 innovative solutions to overcome the negative effects of isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To gain better knowledge of issues faced by this age group, UNICEF conducted a situation analysis on the well-being of adolescents and youth, which provides a comprehensive view of the issues faced by young people. This analysis will inform the advocacy agenda and future programming.

Disability programming

Following Kyrgyzstan's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in
2019, UNICEF initiated a Situation Analysis of Children with Disabilities. The final report will be available in the first quarter of 2021. UNICEF is also finalizing a knowledge, attitudes and practices survey on perceptions of children with disabilities by essential service providers in the public sector and families. The evidence generated by these two studies will allow UNICEF to further accelerate inclusion as a cross-cutting priority for all programmes.

To further promote inclusive education, MoES, with support of USAID and UNICEF operationalised the Concept Note on Inclusive Education (adopted in 2019) through the 'Learning Better Together' project by improving reading through individualised teaching support to children with special education needs. With UNICEF support, four universities also launched programmes to prepare teachers for multilingual education, including Uzbek and Tajik languages. This work was also extended to Early Childhood Education (ECE), where UNICEF supported the inclusive transition of children from preschool to primary school; children of preschool age with special needs were identified, and ways to offer early stimulation and to develop their social, emotional and cognitive skills for better learning in primary school were designed and piloted.
Coordination with other international partners in Kyrgyzstan has been a key component of UNICEF’s COVID-19 response. Within the Development Partners’ Coordination Council, UNICEF chaired the education and social protection working groups and remained an active partner in the health working group. Within the Disaster Response Coordination Unit, the humanitarian platform chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator, UNICEF also played a leading role in Education; Protection; Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH) sectors. In addition, UNICEF led the supply and procurement sub-group of the Health Sector and chaired the UN Crisis Communication Group, coordinating work on Risk Communication and Community Engagement with a larger group of partners. UNICEF was actively engaged in the development of the UN Socio-Economic Response Framework, leading the pillar on social services. Together with UNFPA, WHO and UNDP, UNICEF benefited from funding for the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund to support countries’ responses. UNICEF also partnered with UNDP to secure resources from the SDG Fund and support the development of the Integrated National Financing Framework for SDGs.

UNICEF is recognized as a reliable partner in the area of evidence and data generation. Partnership with the National Statistics Committee was strengthened through joint data collection and analysis initiatives, including an innovative phone-based assessment of COVID-19’s impact, and monitoring of SDG indicators as part of the Voluntary National Review process. UNICEF supported the President’s Office to review and revise the National Development Strategy 2018-2040, and partnered with the Ministries of Economy, Finance and Chamber of Accounts to advance the public finance for children agenda.

UNICEF strengthened its engagement with key donors in Kyrgyzstan. Partnership with the European Union as part of the Spotlight Initiative advanced UN joint efforts to combat violence against women and girls. Similarly, EU-supported regional initiatives on children affected by migration and on COVID-19 response made an important contribution to UNICEF’s work to protect the most vulnerable. UNICEF completed a two-and-a-half-year partnership with USAID on inclusive education by piloting multi-lingual and inclusive education for children with disabilities and from minority groups. UNICEF maintained a robust partnership with the Government of Japan, implementing two grants on strengthening the healthcare system and school-based disaster risk reduction.

Based on a comparative advantage in supply and procurement, UNICEF partnered with international financial institutions – the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank (WB) – securing up to USD1.5 million from the WB and ADB for COVID-19 related supplies.

As Coordinating Agent for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), UNICEF partnered with the World Bank to review and finalize the Education Sector Strategy 2021-2040. With UNICEF support, under WB leadership, a Multiplier Grant Application to GPE was submitted and approved, with a focus on ECE.

The COVID-19 pandemic also resulted in diversifying partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) – in total, UNICEF worked with 29 partner CSOs, which were instrumental in reaching children all over the country despite the restriction of movements. Such partnerships contribute to establishing a credible and dynamic civil society response in support of the child rights agenda.
COVID-19 highlighted critical gaps in service delivery for women and children, especially the most disadvantaged. The health system, in particular, failed to effectively prevent and manage the pandemic due to inadequate epidemiological surveillance, insufficient human resources and capacity, fragile procurement and logistics, poor healthcare facility management and inadequate infrastructure to adhere to infection prevention and control (IPC) requirements. Failure to invest in sufficient sanitation infrastructure over the years limited health and education sectors’ ability to respond to COVID-19. As needs escalated and Government requests for UNICEF support in the area of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in health and education sectors increased, gaps in WASH expertise within the Office became apparent. In 2020, UNICEF drew on short-term external expertise. Moving forward, the Office will build its internal capacity to support the Government in mobilizing an effective WASH response to the pandemic and investing domestic resources in long-term WASH infrastructure and practices.

The social protection system was unable to effectively address the profound socio-economic impact of COVID-19 because it could not quickly expand social protection programmes for the growing population in need. Kyrgyzstan is facing a major fiscal crisis, in which partners/donors close the gaps in the state’s obligations. Currently, the Government perceives expansion of social protection schemes as unfeasible. However, there is room to review current programmes to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. This will require joint engagement and advocacy by UN agencies and IFIs, and common policy guidance. For example, the productive technical partnership with the World Bank on poverty and social protection established during the impact assessment of COVID-19 should underpin a joint policy advocacy effort to reduce child poverty and scale up existing social assistance programmes.

Young people demonstrated high levels of civic engagement in 2020. Young volunteers were invaluable in saving lives during the COVID-19 crisis, by directly supporting medical teams in hospitals and bringing medical equipment and drugs to patient’s home.

Following parliamentary elections in October 2020, young people took to the streets to contest results and demand change. These developments demonstrated youth’s strong demand to have a voice and a role in shaping the future of Kyrgyzstan. Currently, there are no meaningful platforms for young people to express their views and engage in decision making at the national level. Building on UNICEF’s efforts to amplify voices of youth at the local level through the Youth and Child Friendly Local Governance initiative, UNICEF will explore strengthening its work on youth participation in 2021.

**Innovations**

COVID-19 provided an opportunity to accelerate telemedicine reform and implementation. Telemedicine’s role in delivering routine healthcare services, especially at the primary health care level, was accentuated by the pandemic. In July 2020, an estimated 21 per cent of healthcare workers were infected with COVID-19, further compromising the health sector’s ability to respond effectively. Remote healthcare minimizes direct contact between patient and provider, reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. It also frees up health facilities, enabling optimal care for those affected by COVID-19. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to adjust existing guidelines for primary healthcare level personnel so they could offer consultations to patients via smartphones (through the WhatsApp platform), referring patients to facilities only when necessary. UNICEF shared these innovations in a webinar with Latin American and Caribbean region countries.

In education, besides reaching over 1.4 million children in preschools and schools with remote learning lessons, advances were also made to promote digitalisation and improve the EMIS. The new EMIS tracks all children’s inclusion and participation in quality education (including children with disabilities and children in difficult life circumstances such as children from migrant families, and children without parental care). This data, student attendance rates, and teacher qualifications can be further disaggregated. Every individual recorded in EMIS is allocated a unique identification number (PIN)
from the Civil Registry Office central database. This allows EMIS to be linked to other Health and
Social Development sector databases to monitor, refer and seek cross-sectoral solutions to the barriers
that some children may face. In cooperation with the National Statistical Committee, all statistical
reporting forms integrate to EMIS, and in 2021, the MOES will be able to produce education sector
statistical reports from EMIS, with UNICEF support.

Pandemic restrictions demanded innovative ways of collecting data. A MICS Follow-up survey on the
impact of COVID-19 on Children and Women was completed by the National Statistics Committee
(NSC) in December 2020, with UNICEF support. The planned face-to-face MICS follow up survey
was replaced by a safer telephone-based survey. Assessment was based on a sub-sample (3,886) of
MICS-2018 households. The survey provides important insights into the profound impact of
COVID-19 on child well-being. Widespread job and income loss and economic insecurity among
families will likely increase rates of child poverty and child labour, and hamper access to quality
healthcare. The survey also estimates how many children were covered by remote learning during
school closures and where inequalities persisted. The new system is now in place and the capacity of
the NSC has been strengthened to allow it to continue conducting short surveys on various MICS
subsamples for rapid, reliable and inexpensive data collection.

COVID-19 exacerbated the weakness of case management services provided to children and families.
Due to movement restrictions during quarantine, case managers were unable to promptly assess the
situation of most vulnerable children and to provide the services required. To strengthen the response
to at-risk children during COVID-19, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Labour and Social
Development to create a digitalised case management system. The database has been developed to
simplify and enhance the case management service, from initial warning signs, to the closure of the
case. The system generates an individual child protection plan and family support plan.