Highlights

Peru has the highest COVID-19 mortality rate in the world and second highest number of COVID-19 deaths in the region. As of June 30, 2021, there are 2,057,554 confirmed cases and 192,687 deaths, of which 120,140 and 1,032, respectively, are children and adolescents. With a population of 32 million and less than 3,000 ICU beds available nationwide, the health system is struggling to cope with the situation.

The socioeconomic effects of COVID-19 have been devastating. By December 2020, 1.2 million children were pushed into poverty as Peru’s GDP fell by 11%, the worst setback in 30 years. Due to the pandemic, 705,000 children interrupted their studies or are at risk of doing so, while UNICEF estimates a 10.7% increase in anemia and 8.5% reduction in vaccinations among children under the age of 3. The lockdown has had a devastating impact on children and adolescents’ mental health, with close to one third at risk of suffering from psychological difficulties (UNICEF, 2021).

In addition, Peru has the second largest population of Venezuelan migrants in the region, hosting 1.05 million of which over 190,000 are children and adolescents. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, mandatory quarantine increased social, economic and physical vulnerability among incoming and settled Venezuelan families, and increased exposure to violence. As the number of migrants and refugees entering Peru through irregular pathways continues to increase, the lack of a valid identity document in Peru is an important barrier to access public health services and the social protection measures implemented by the State. Mostly in the informal labour market, migrant parents have been pushed back to work, increasing risk of contagion, and overcrowded living conditions favour COVID-19 transmission.

In the midst of a heated presidential election and political uncertainty, the pandemic has increased the risks faced by the most vulnerable, especially women and girls, families living in poverty or headed by self-employed workers, whose livelihoods have been impacted by the quarantine, as well as indigenous communities with limited access to health services, and migrants and displaced people in overcrowded living conditions with limited or inexistent local support networks.
**Highlights (cont.)**

UNICEF’s response strategy focuses on helping ensure children’s rights are fulfilled. Since the start of 2021, main results include:

- Reach of 264.6 million in UNICEF’s COVID-19 related messages on social media, as well as 2.3M engagements and 6.2M video views.

- #Regresemos (#LetsGoBack) campaign to advocate for a safe, flexible, gradual and voluntary return to school had a reach of over 27 million on social media and at least 530,500 people via TV and radio.

- 7 studies on COVID-19 and Migration’s impact on children in Peru.

- 31,198 children and adolescents accessed UNICEF-supported Chat 100 to report cases of violence and receive support or referrals.

- 230,392 women, children and adolescents received maternal, child and adolescent health services in UNICEF-supported facilities, including 123,468 women, 60,315 girls and 46,609 boys. Of the total, 1,296 were migrants.

- 16,568 people benefitted from hygiene kits: 1914 and 1904 indigenous girls and boys, and 618 and 674 migrant girls and boys.

- 107,250 views of YouTube psychosocial support videos elaborated with Ministry of Education.

**Funding overview and partners**

Since the launch of the 2021 Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal, UNICEF Peru has received generous donations from Spanish Committee for UNICEF, USAID (OFDA), UNOCHA, ECHO, USA (State) BPRM, Republic of Korea, SIDA–Sweden, Banco de Crédito del Perú, Alicorp S.A.A., and Pacifico Compañía de Seguros, which have allowed for the timely implementation of immediate actions in UNICEF’s response plan.

**Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy**

UNICEF’s response strategy focuses on supporting the national and local health, education, social protection and child protection systems through policy development and capacity-building, drawing upon strong local partnerships and networks, especially for the most vulnerable populations, including indigenous communities in the Amazon and Venezuelan migrants. As part of a joint framework, agencies are sharing information on their activities and achievements.

Within the National Humanitarian Network, the cluster coordination mechanism between Government, civil society organisations and the United Nations System led by OCHA, UNICEF leads Education, Protection and WASH working groups, and actively participates on Health and Nutrition & Food Security working groups. These working groups developed COVID-19 specific gap and capacity analyses in case there is an activation requirement from the Government of Peru, following the network’s activation protocol.

UNICEF and UNESCO co-lead the MoE-spearheaded Peru chapter of the “Global Coalition for Education”, which aims to channel support and leverage funds to implement MoE’s COVID-19 response strategy, and where UNICEF acts as an advocate for Venezuelan children as a group in particular vulnerability. Active participation continues in the Migrants and Refugees Working Group (GTRM), where it coordinates with other agencies, organisations and State entities in the Protection, Basic Needs, Social Integration, Information Management and Communication subgroups.
Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Health and Nutrition

UNICEF has continued to work at local level in Loreto, Huancavelica and Northern Lima contributing to close gaps in ECD with care packages for pregnant women, newborns and children under two years of age during COVID-19, and providing support to families through health and social protection services.

Preparations are underway to pilot the identification and early intervention of children under 3 years of age with developmental risks and disabilities in Loreto and Northern Lima.

UNICEF continues providing technical assistance for the reactivation of adolescent health services in the context of COVID-19 facilitating and supporting training sessions for health personnel in the basic package for comprehensive adolescent health care during the pandemic.

Training sessions reached 270 health personnel in Huancavelica in May, and 46 in Loreto in June (41 female, 5 male).

UNICEF has continued to work in Loreto, Huancavelica and Northern Lima to reactivate early childhood development services, including prenatal control check-ups, growth and development monitoring sessions. Vulnerable families also receive educational material, hygiene and toy kits for new-born care and promotion of ECD. In Northern Lima, 335 vulnerable families with pregnant women, newborns and children under 2 years of age received home visits, of which 82 were migrants.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies

UNICEF delivered hygiene kits to migrant children and adolescents crossing the border through irregular pathways in Tumbes, differentiated by age groups and with a gender focus. Between January and July 2021, 618 girls and 674 boys received individual hygiene kits. In response to the trend in age groups registered in IOM's border monitoring, UNICEF decided to increase the number of hygiene kits for early-aged boys and girls. UNICEF coordinated with other humanitarian actors and community-based organizations for the distribution of these hygiene kits to migrant and refugee children, adolescents, and their caregivers in other crowded areas of transit.

UNICEF decided to extend for four months its intervention with implementing partner, COOPI, for the delivery of complementary hygiene kits for children and adolescents, this time not only in Tumbes region but other areas of high transit as identified by continuous territorial monitoring. Given the upcoming establishment of the new government, UNICEF will be assessing the migratory context on the northern border to timely adjust its strategy.
Education

UNICEF continued to support the MoE’s Remote Education Program “I Learn at Home” (#AprendoEnCasa in Spanish), focusing on improving access in rural areas by helping strengthen cultural and linguistic diversity, improve parent participation, and design the complementary "I Learn in my Community" strategy. In rural communities in prioritized regions, through the Radio Escuela project, UNICEF is promoting radio access to educational content and learning projects. 60 connectivity kits were delivered to communities that will benefit 6,385 students.

UNICEF continues to promote the Coalition for Education as a mechanism to coordinate civil society and private sector initiatives. The Coalition provided inputs to the school reopening legislature, support to schools on pedagogical assistance, training for school personnel (free training programs, scholarships), education materials (1,900 tablets for students, 1 solar energy panel, 666 solar chargers, 2,828 school supply kits, 25 speakers in rural areas), and the distribution of 60,000 masks.

As co-leader of the Education Sub-Group of the Refugees and Migrants Working Group (GTRM in Spanish), UNICEF supported the MoE in promoting extemporaneous enrollment for the 2021 school year through webinars for organizations working with migrant families. The Sub-Group begun participation in preparing the 2022 RMRP, helping in the literature review for the upcoming Needs Assessment and sectoral workshops. The Education Cannot Wait Multi-year Program, of which UNICEF is grantee, culminated the selection process for subgrantees and implementing partner, and agreements are being drafted to begin implementation in schools.

UNICEF coordinated with the MoE to launch the new National Back-to-School and Education Continuity Strategy, contributing with the active search methodology for identifying out-of-school or at-risk children, and with its remedial learning programme carried out with 621 students (278 girls and 343 boys; 27 migrants). This effort validated pedagogic methodologies, including working with volunteers in community environments.

During meetings with the Minister of Education and the adviser to the Minister of Health, UNICEF highlighted the importance of vaccinating teachers as an incentive to accelerate school reopening. In June, the MoE announced the start of vaccination for 200,000 teachers nationwide.

UNICEF is printing 34,000 booklets for families, children and adolescents in Loreto and Ucayali to promote safe school return and COVID-19 prevention. Following the MoE’s criteria and procedures for safe reopening, UNICEF has supported the development of three specific guidelines for school personnel, including one with pedagogic and socio-emotional considerations. UNICEF also developed and disseminated three brochures with guidance for children, adolescents and their families with clear messages and recommendations to ensure mutual care and protection.

As of 30 June, there are 2,581 schools and education services offering face-to-face and blended learning in 11 regions of the country. Reopening has concentrated in rural areas with little contagion.
Child Protection

UNICEF continues to provide technical support to MIMP’s Special Protection Unit (UPE) in Tumbes to improve the case management of unaccompanied adolescents, particularly their referral to migratory regularization processes and services that continue to strengthen their progressive autonomy and facilitate their social inclusion within host communities once they reach adulthood. A call has been issued for a consultancy for the construction of competency frameworks for addressing children on the move.

To establish family based alternative care for no accompanied children in Tumbres, UNICEF supported development of community based foster family recruitment strategy which was validated by the MIMP and to be implemented in partnership with SOS International Children’s Village and other locally based CSO/NGOs. 30 recruited families are to go through formal evaluation process of foster families of the MIMP to be registered in their foster families database.

UNICEF delivered psychosocial care kits, differentiated by age groups, to children, adolescents and caregivers in a situation of transit through Tumbes. These kits contain recreational activities with an educational approach, to promote their psychological and social well-being in a context of changes and difficult situations due to migration. UNICEF coordinated with other humanitarian actors and community-based organizations for the distribution of these kits in other crowded areas of transit. As part of the intervention, adolescents and caregivers also received key messages on children’s rights, prevention of family separation and access to protection services.

UNICEF began methodological transfer of its model to strengthen children and adolescents' psychoemotional skills in juvenile deprivation of liberty centres, training educators and psychologists from juvenile deprivation of liberty centres and residential care facilities.

MIMP’s UNICEF-supported 1810 hotline, to denounce cases of family violence, has received 1,725 calls related to violence against children since January 2021, while videos on YouTube with psychosocial support content have been viewed 107,250 times.

Monitoring and Evaluation

During 2021, UNICEF has published the following studies:

- Mental health of children and adolescents during COVID-19
- COVID-19: The drop in household income and its impact on child and adolescent indicators
- Mental health of Venezuelan migrant children and adolescents during COVID-19
- The right to study: inclusion of Venezuelan migrant children and adolescents in the Peruvian educational system
- New kids on the block: Evidence on Venezuelan children and adolescents in Peru before COVID-19

UNICEF also conducted two in-house studies on its response to the migration crisis: a second measurement of the migratory integration project implemented in Northern Lima (instead of the project's final evaluation, as the methodology and assumptions changed during COVID); and a case study of the adaptation of UNICEF’s migration response strategy to the context of COVID-19.
The studies have helped decision-making in UNICEF’s strategies and programmes, generating evidence on both results achieved and needs that remain unmet. They have also served for UNICEF’s advocacy with the Peruvian Government, to guide both the improvement of education, health and protection services and the Government’s actions aimed at children and adolescents as a response to COVID-19, including strategies to ensure continued education, attend mental health, and steer social protection actions.

Social protection

UNICEF is conducting a systematization of the social protection measures implemented by the Peruvian State to help poor and vulnerable families to cope with the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19. This exercise aims at identifying strengths, weakness and bottlenecks during the design, implementation and monitoring of these measures, as well as to offer technical assistance to the new government to address the main challenges and to strengthen the social protection system to respond to emergencies.

Communication for Development

UNICEF prepared an Accountability to Affected Populations infographic on the migration integration project and shared it with the children, adolescents, families, leaders and allies in the communities that participated in the project. The piece included information on the activities that were carried out, the number and demographics of beneficiaries, results achieved, pictures, and quotes from participants.

The vaccination communication strategy for indigenous communities is being coordinated with the Ministry of Culture, the local Health Directorates of Loreto and Ucayali, and organizations representing indigenous populations, including communication material and capacity-building. Three radio spots were developed by ORPIO Ucayali Regional Native Peoples Organization and broadcast in local radios, and a video for leaders is being produced with the Indigenous Vaccination Command. Three radio campaigns were conducted in Loreto, Ucayali and Huancavelica on the importance and safety of vaccination, as well as printed material for community actors to respond to vaccination concerns.

As part of the GTRM Communication Sub-Group, UNICEF coordinated complementary COVID-19 prevention and vaccination activities to inform migrant populations.
Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

During 2021, UNICEF’s COVID-19 related messages on social media had a reach of 264.6 million, as well as 2.3 million engagements and 6.2 million video views.

From 14 April to 24 May, UNICEF ran the #Regresemos (#LetsGoBack) campaign to advocate for a safe, flexible, gradual and voluntary return to school in Peru. The campaign included a video adapted from a LAC Regional Office piece, 3,983 TV and radio ads for three prioritized subnational regions and digital content for a national audience. As a part of the campaign, UNICEF ran a series of webinars with the Ministry of Education, UNESCO and La República national newspaper on including children with disabilities, conditions for a safe return and mental health, which had 84,222 views. UNICEF shared stories from Amazonian communities and published a series of six articles in La República and an Op-ed in El Comercio national newspaper to highlight the importance of reopening schools. UNICEF also released practical back-to-school guides for parents, adolescents and young children. Overall, the campaign had a reach of over 27 million on social media and at least 530,500 people via TV and radio.

In support of the Ministry of Health’s COVID-19 vaccine communication campaign, UNICEF printed posters, flyers and brochures, and contracted a community loudspeaker service to broadcast public service announcements on Peru’s new universal vaccination plan. During World Immunization Week, UNICEF continued to promote vaccine confidence, in partnership with PAHO and the UN in Peru, by sharing a video and stories of vaccinated older adults expressing their joy, relief and hope (Aura, Miguel, and nurse Shirley).

From 31 May to 30 June, UNICEF ran the digital campaign entitled #MeVacunoPorTi (#VaccinatedForYou), calling on the public to get vaccinated for their loved ones. The campaign’s paid and organic posts had a reach of 35.2 million, more than 120,000 engagements and over 4 million video views. Through a partnership with Facebook, UNICEF will evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign’s different messages and formats to inform future vaccine confidence campaigns.

UNICEF continued to support the Government of Peru’s COVID-19 vaccine communication strategy (#PongoElHombro) by producing a three-week TV and radio ad campaign. Launched on 25 June, the campaign aims to promote uptake of second vaccine doses and appeal to the hope of families reuniting post-pandemic. The national campaign is running on three TV networks and two radio stations, as well as community loudspeakers and LED screens in Lima.

UNICEF also ran a digital campaign on parenting during the pandemic. The campaign featured a webinar on mental health, presented in partnership with La República, with government and private sector speakers, as well as testimonies from mothers from Loreto, an Amazonian region, and a social influencer from Lima. The webinar reached a wide audience with over 11,000 views.
Human Interest Stories and External Media

Between January and July 2021, UNICEF has generated 596 media mentions, with US$ 783,751 in free press, to raise awareness of COVID-19’s impact on children and advocate for a child-centred response.

Highlights include an Op-ed on reopening schools by the Representative, 25 mentions related to the release of UNICEF’s report A year of pandemic, a year of action in Peru, which calls on future authorities to prioritize children in the COVID-19 response, 27 pieces related to reopening schools as a part of the #Regresemos campaign, 12 mentions on UNICEF’s call for G7 countries to donate vaccine doses to low-income countries, and 9 mentions on the importance of parental care during the pandemic. UNICEF’s Representative in Peru Ana de Mendoza also advocated for vaccination of teachers at the 4 June COVAX delivery.

To mark the end of “Integrating Venezuelan Children and Adolescents in Peru”, a two-year project funded by the Government of Canada, UNICEF held a webinar to present research on migrant children in Peru and discuss progress made towards their social inclusion. Representatives from the Government of Peru and the Embassy of Canada participated in the online event, which had 1,445 views. UNICEF generated 8 media mentions through the event’s press release, with US$ 2,527 in free press. UNICEF also published a story on how a school, with support from the project, helped Venezuelan migrant Sofía feel at home in Peru.

On social media, UNICEF amplified #AcortemosDistancias, a digital campaign from the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela to promote migrant solidarity and inclusion. The Peru Country Office’s posts had a reach of 46,468 and 438 engagements.

For more on COVID-19’s impact on children in Peru and UNICEF’s response, see these stories and videos:

- **Hope comes in small doses**
- **In Peru, the sun helps vaccines keep their cool**
- **In Peru, migrant families face the pandemic with the help of cash transfers**
- **In the Peruvian Amazon, loudspeakers help keep indigenous children learning**
- **Getting oxygen to the heart of the Amazon**
- **In Peru's Amazon, It Will Take More Than Soap And Water**
- **Solidarity and care in confinement in northern Lima**
- **The challenge of virtual education in the Andes**
- **Videos**: Delivery of kits for newborns and young children in Lima and the Peruvian Amazon
  - Video: Delivery of hygiene kits to indigenous communities in the Peruvian Amazon
  - Video: Providing education and psychosocial support kits to students in northern Lima

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