



Tajikistan Humanitarian Situation Report No. 1



Reporting Period: 1 January to 30 June 2021

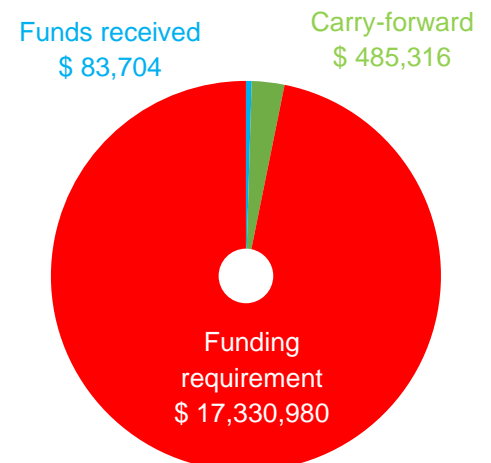
Highlights

- The increasing number of COVID-19 cases in Tajikistan, since mid-May prompted national authorities to reinstate preventive measures to contain the virus. As of June 22nd, 14,291 cases have been confirmed by the Ministry of Health.
- UNICEF Tajikistan implements an integrated, multi-sectoral approach, focusing on providing critical WASH services in education and health facilities; ensuring the continuity of health and nutrition services for children and pregnant women; facilitating treatment for children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM); supporting low-income families with access to cash transfers through existing social protection systems; supporting access to education; and reaching children affected by violence, abuse and neglect with prevention and assistance, including Gender-Based Violence prevention services.
- Secured partnership with EU in 2020 and regular resources was repurposed for interventions aimed at tackling the immediate and secondary impact of the COVID-19 pandemic including strengthening capacities of the national counterparts to ensure continuity of learning through TV and distance learning modalities, support provision of early childhood interventions, social protection for most vulnerable, nutrition and child feeding counseling, access to adequate hygiene and sanitation at schools and risk communication aimed at prevention against sustained transmission of COVID-19 in the country.
- In addition to the impact of COVID-19, in the first half of 2021, children in Tajikistan has experienced multiple humanitarian and security incidents including polio outbreak, flooding, mudflows, landslides and earthquakes affecting their survival and development. UNICEF Tajikistan jointly with other UN Agencies also working on preparedness for the potential refugee influx from Afghanistan following recent security developments in the provinces in Afghanistan bordering Tajikistan.
- UNICEF Tajikistan appealed for USD 17.9 million for 2021. With the carried-over funds from 2020 in an amount of 485,316 and fundraised 83,704, UNICEF Tajikistan secured only \$ 569,020, with a funding gap of 96% remaining. UNICEF appreciates the generous contributions of all donors and partners.

Situation in Numbers



Funding Requirement US\$ 17.9 million



*Funding available includes funds received in the current year; carry-over from the previous year; and repurposed funds with agreement from donors.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

UNICEF Tajikistan appeals for USD 17.9 million to provide lifesaving humanitarian support for women in children in Tajikistan. At the end of this reporting period, UNICEF has received US\$ 569,020 including the carry-over funds of US\$485,316 from 2020 and remains a significant funding gap of 96 percent. In 2021, UNICEF has received \$83,000 from [Xylem Fund](#) for the procurement and distribution of WASH supplies for 85 targeted schools across the country. UNICEF acknowledged the generous contribution from all public and private donors, especially European Union, GAVI, Xylem Fund for their generous contribution towards Tajikistan HAC. Without sufficient funding, more than a million children are still in need of social protection, around half a million children and their caregivers lack critical water, sanitation, and hygiene supplies, and 20,000 children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition in need of immediate treatment. Despite the huge gap in HAC funding, UNICEF has been leveraging available resources from existing programs to address needs around the impact of the COVID-19.

Flexible resources remain critical to UNICEF's ability to respond effectively and efficiently to this crisis in a comprehensive way and cover unfunded priority areas, including WASH, nutrition, education, child protection, gender-based violence, social protection, risk communication/ community engagement and accountability to affected populations. Without adequate and timely funding, UNICEF and its partners will be unable to support an adequate response to the humanitarian needs of children and their families.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Tajikistan remains one of the most disaster-prone countries in Europe and Central Asia, and the only low-income country in the region¹, has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has triggered unprecedented health, humanitarian and socio-economic crises. Key challenges relate to the weak health system, inadequate infection prevention control practices at health facility and also on a community level, inadequate quality of care and poor surveillance system. Although economic and social metrics slight improved at the beginning of 2021, with eased restrictions for travel and increased remittances from Russia, which hosts a major migrant population from Tajikistan, surge in COVID-19 in the Russian Federation and neighboring countries has prompted the reintroduction of COVID-19 travel restrictions, which negatively impacts the economy in the country.

The pandemic has had significant macroeconomic impacts on health, nutrition, education, child and social protection, and employment in Tajikistan. An estimated 3.3 million people, or one-third of the population, are food insecure, including 1.6 million people who are severely food insecure². Reported real gross domestic product growth fell by 3.2 per cent in the first five months of 2020³. These rising vulnerabilities have left the country more exposed to shocks and stresses, increased children and women's vulnerability to gender-based violence and left more children living in poverty.

As of June 30, 2021, Tajikistan has officially confirmed 13,478 positive cases of COVID-19. Although at the beginning of the year, a small number of cases were reported, starting from May 2021, with the surge of the new variants across the region and globally, a number of cases significantly increased in Tajikistan. With the rise in the number of COVID-19 cases in the country, the National COVID-19 Task Force chaired by the Prime Minister of Tajikistan has adopted decisions to intensify coordination of activities of relevant ministries and agencies on controlling the observance by the population of the rules of personal and public hygiene, controlling service and cultural centers, and taking strict preventive and anti-epidemic measures.

Tajikistan joined the COVAX mechanism in late 2020 and in February 2021 the Government with the support of the WHO and UNICEF finalized and approved a National Vaccine Deployment Plan. Tajikistan was the first Central Asian country to receive 192,000 doses – a first batch of the COVID-19 vaccine through the COVAX mechanism on March 8th and official vaccination according to the NVDP launched on the 23rd of March. Based on the eligibility criteria, first group included front line health workers and medical professionals to be vaccinated against the COVID-19. Government of Tajikistan also included teachers as a priority group for the vaccination. The Government of Tajikistan has also prioritized teachers as part of the first group for vaccination. Schools has been operating without interruptions since August 2020.

Nationwide vaccination is ongoing with vaccines procured through COVAX and a batch donated by the Government of People's Republic of China. Multiple international partners like World Bank and ADB has committed resources towards procurement of vaccines for nationwide immunization as part of their health interventions. UNICEF closely collaborates with these partners to support and facilitate the COVID 19 vaccination programme.

Tajikistan has among the worst nutrition indicators in Europe and Central Asia: 18 per cent of children under 5 years are stunted, 6 per cent are wasted and 1.8 per cent are severely wasted⁴. This situation, combined with the weak health care system, growing food insecurity, limited access to WASH, and interruptions of nutrition services, seriously threatens the nutritional well-being of children and women. The number of children living below the national poverty line – currently nearly one third of all children in the country – is expected to increase. Due to lockdown and travel restrictions, remittances have dropped sharply and put children from migrant families at high risk of multiple deprivations. Across Tajikistan, 4.9 million people lack access to basic sanitation at

¹ United Nations Sustainable Development Group, 'Integrated Socio-Economic Response Framework to COVID-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan', UNSDG, August 2020.

² World Food Programme (WFP), April 2020.

³ 'Integrated Socio-Economic Response Framework to COVID-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan'.

⁴ Tajikistan Demographic and Health Survey, 2017.

home and 1,500 schools lack adequate WASH facilities and services, leaving a significant portion of the population at risk of COVID-19⁵. Lack of WASH resources in schools and health facilities will also affect school reopenings and infection prevention and control in health facilities.

Apart from the devastating impact of the COVID-19, children in Tajikistan has also experienced multiple other humanitarian and security incidents, health emergency such as outbreak of the polio, flooding, mudflows, landslides, border dispute and earthquakes in different regions of Tajikistan, which has put lives of children in greater risk. UNICEF Tajikistan jointly with other UN Agencies is working on preparedness for the potential refugee influx from Afghanistan following recent security developments in the provinces bordering Tajikistan.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Health

In the reporting period, UNICEF successfully supported approval of the National Vaccine Deployment plan and with the resources by GAVI carried over from 2020, providing support in the early stage of targeted vaccination against COVID-19. The country received the first batch of the vaccine through the COVAX facility and with the support of the WHO and UNICEF continuing targeting the immunization campaign of the population. During the reporting period, 165,000 children and women accessed health care services through UNICEF-supported facilities reaching 30% of the appeal target of 2021. UNICEF Tajikistan needs funding to reach the remaining 350,000 children and mothers in need of health interventions. As of 19 of June, 116,341 (62.1%) received the first dose and 13.5% the second dose delivered by the COVAX mechanism. On, 20th of June, the country received 300,000 doses from the People's Republic of China through bilateral agreement. Around 192,000 doses of the vaccine are expected through the COVAX AMC facility in August- September 2021. UNICEF team has leverage carried over resources by GAVI repurposed for COVID-19 interventions and ensuring continuity of services like immunization and early childhood interventions.

Nutrition

In line with the government plan of action to reduce the prevalence of wasting, UNICEF is supporting the government in the implementation of an integrated response to address the needs of malnourished children, pregnant and lactating women. During the reporting period, 1,500 children with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment (against 17,000 targeted) were reached through the Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition program and 350,000 primary caregivers received infant and young child feeding counseling in UNICEF supported facilities (against 500,000 targeted). Due to funding constraints, UNICEF was not able to reach 500,000 children from 6 to 59 months in need of micronutrient supplementation

Child Protection

During the reporting period, a total of 232 children, including children with disabilities received psychosocial support, information about COVID-19 preventive measures, online consultations, and legal support to receive medical and social services. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in alternative care institutions, UNICEF provided sanitation supplies to children in residential childcare institutions across the country reaching 5,586 children. As a result of the secondary impact of COVID-19 among communities, including increased cases of violence, mental health issues, continuity of access to social services, UNICEF carried out various awareness-raising interventions covering issues related to parental support, the use of the complaint mechanisms, prevention of violence against children, exploitation and abuse of children and women, including GBV and how to access services for children. More than 79,121 children and caregivers, 4,098 teachers, 228 parent-teacher association (PTA) members and 160 members of parental committees were reached because of these activities. 1,326 members or student council learned on how to access child-friendly complaint mechanism.

Education

With the 4-year partnership launched with European Union in 2020, UNICEF has been closely working with the Ministry of Education (MoES) to strengthen the national capacities to guide long-term education reforms contributing to systems strengthening further mitigating the negative impact of COVID-19 on education. Schools have not been closed and with formal and nonformal education, UNICEF has been supporting continuity of education for 2.2 million children in the country. In light of the economic crisis and fiscal deficits as a result of COVID 19, UNICEF is supporting the MoES in conducting an in-depth financial analysis of its national and local budgets to plan for more efficient use of resources and leverage additional funding to the education sector, including through private and public partnerships. UNICEF continued support to MoES in the development of remote learning support systems including the development of TV lessons and digital platforms for all grades and subjects of the national curriculum. UNICEF further finalized the design of digital education platforms "Magic Box" using Microsoft supported Learning Passport and "Maktab Mobile" to address the learning gaps faced by over 2 million children and adolescents. The platforms aim to enable access to continuous, quality education services across the country. UNICEF has also provided technical and financial support to ensure continuous quality early childhood development counselling and/or parenting support of the children under 5 years. Technical Working Group on ECD established by the Ministry of Health has finalized the adaptation and contextualization of the Mobile Parenting App based on the Nurturing Care Framework, one of the specific objectives of the

⁵ WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene, the World Bank and the Tajikistan Ministry of Education and Science, 2017.

application is to provide remote support to parents during Covid-19. The user – testing will be conducted in August 2021 and nationwide launching will take place by the end of 2021. Meanwhile, 35,189 caregivers/parents were reached through digital social networks with integrated key messages on early childhood development, immunization, nutrition, and Covid-19. Trainings to improve ECD counselling and parenting support are conducted in Rasht District covering 280 healthcare work.

WASH

Responding to the critical WASH and IPC needs in schools, UNICEF in partnership with the MoES and with the support of Xylem Fund has reached 100 education facilities reaching 46,395 children and teachers (25 secondary schools and 75 education facilities with special status, e.g. boarding schools, orphan children’s homes, specialized institutions for children with disabilities). There are still critical needs around the provision of WASH supplies and services for 620,000 people. Additionally, UNICEF in partnership with the Committee of Emergency Situation and Civil Defence (CoES) and Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan (RCST); 20,086 people were reached with critical hygiene items while responding to the humanitarian situation occurred during the reporting period. There are still critical needs around the provision of WASH supplies and services for 576,919 people (out of 643,400 targeted). In order to respond to these needs, it is planned that additional 45,000 children and teachers will be targeted through UNICEF WASH in Schools Program to be implemented jointly with partners during 2021 - 2022. Under the “Infection Prevention and Control” EU-funded project, it is expected that more than 500,000 people will benefit through improved access to WASH services in Health Care Facilities during 2022 – 2025.

Communication for Development (C4D), Risk Communications

UNICEF Tajikistan is leading the risk communication and community engagement working group under the UN Interagency COVID 19 response group, providing technical leadership to the Ministry of Health and other development actors. During the reporting period, UNICEF jointly with MOH conducted a perception survey to support vaccine introduction in Tajikistan, developed IEC and advocacy materials on COVID-19 vaccination, sustained transmission, and people at risk’s perception about the pandemic and access to vaccination. As the office responded to other humanitarian emergencies in the country, C4D interventions were integrated based on the humanitarian needs (e.g two rounds of national polio campaign, C4D support to humanitarian disasters and incidents).

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

In 2021, UNICEF continues to leverage its education sector coordination role to support the MoES in the implementation of the national COVID-19 education response, leading risk communication and community engagement cluster under UN Resident Coordinator office and co-leads WASH thematic working groups. At the strategic level the launch of the newly approved National Strategy for Education Development in February 2021 for the period until 2030, provided an opportunity to rethink and reimagine education considering current COVID-19 challenges.

UNICEF continues to provide leadership around the multi-sectoral response against COVID-19 with the finalization and approval of the National Vaccine Deployment Plan for COVID19 vaccine, continued provision of health equipment and services to the affected population (carried over from last year donor support), facilitating the delivery of the COVAX vaccine and support in launching targeting vaccination accompanied with technical support around health, cold chain, and communication for development.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

- A story on the start of COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Tajikistan: <https://uni.cf/2SMymw4>
- A story on delivery of Hygiene supplies to 100 schools nationwide: <https://uni.cf/3gMmS4B>
- A video about the UNICEF & Xylem support with the provision of WASH supplies to 100 schools in Tajikistan: <https://bit.ly/3vN2q86>

Next SitRep: 31st January 2022

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Summary of Programme Results

Indicators	2021 Target	UNICEF Results Jan – Jun 2021		
		Total #	Male/boys	Female/girls
Area of Response				
Health and Nutrition				
# children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities	550,000	373,861	n/a	n/a
# children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment	17,000	750	382	368
# primary caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling	500,000	350,000	0	350,000
# children aged 6 to 59 months receiving multiple micronutrient powders	500,000	0 ⁶	n/a	n/a
WASH				
# children accessing appropriate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and hygiene services in learning facilities and safe spaces	49,000	43,384	23,788	19,596
# people reached with critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies (including hygiene items) and services	643,400	20,086	9,549	10,537
Child protection, GBViE and PSEA				
# children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support	11,250	0 ⁷	n/a	n/a
# women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions	32,000	80,470	40,268	40,202
# unaccompanied and separated children reunified with their primary caregiver or provided with family-based care/alternative care services	1,000	355	182	173
Education				
# children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning	2,000,000	2,256,781	1,185,610	1,071,171
# teachers trained on delivering digital, distance and blended learning	13,000	7,757	n/a	n/a
# parents and caregivers of children under 5 years receiving early childhood development counselling and/or parenting support	250,000	35,189	n/a	n/a
Social protection and cash transfers				
# households reached with cash transfers through an existing government system where UNICEF provided technical assistance and funding	44,772	5,497	n/a	n/a
C4D, community engagement and AAP				
# people participating in engagement actions for social and behavioural change	2,683,800	8,427	n/a	n/a
# people who shared their concerns and asked questions/clarifications to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms	50,000	0 ⁸	n/a	n/a

⁶ Nutrition indicator has not been achieved due to the lack of funding

⁷ Psychosocial support was not delivered due to the lack of funding

⁸ Due to lack of funding, the indicator has not been achieved

Annex B

Funding Status*

Sector	Requirements (\$)	Funds available		Funding gap	
		Humanitarian resources received in 2021	Resources available from 2020 (Carry-over)	\$	%
Health & Nutrition	3,719,756	0	485,316	3,234,440	87
WASH	4,455,540	83,704	0	4,371,836	98
Child Protection, GBVIE and PSEA	1,065,717	0	0	1,065,717	100
Education	1,509,783	0	0	1,509,783	100
Social Protection and cash transfers	5,350,254	0	0	5,350,254	100
C4D, community engagement and AAP	1,762,826	0	0	1,762,826	100
Total	17,863,876	83,704	485,316	17,330,980	96%