HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID/Georgia and UNICEF renewed their partnership to support the Government of Georgia in responding to COVID-19 pandemic — please see MONTHLY FOCUS on page 6.
- UNICEF, together with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and H.E. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan distributed hand sanitizers donated by SARAYA Co. Ltd. to Gori Public School No. 3. The donation of 140 tons of alcohol-based hand sanitizers were distributed in 2,080 public schools of Georgia.
- UNICEF is engaging with various actors to conduct a quantitative survey on adolescent’s knowledge, attitude and practice towards gambling.
- UNICEF continues to support MoIDPOTLHSA and the State Care Agency in deinstitutionalization (DI) by providing assessment and crisis intervention for children who left Ninotsminda boarding school.
- UNICEF, in partnership with the State Agency for Religious Issues, organized a series of two-day seminars on child rights; the first seminar involved 17 representatives of seven religious denominations. A second seminar was organized by the Patriarchy of Georgia and UNICEF in Gori for the representatives of the Orthodox Church. The seminars touched on the issues of child rights and the role of religious leaders in promoting child rights.
- UNICEF, together with MoIDPOTLHSA, organized a two-day working meeting about the transformation of the assessment system for persons with disabilities and optimization of their social protection measures.
- UNICEF, with financing from USAID and in partnership with Geostat, completed data collection for the fifth wave of the Real Time Monitoring Survey on self-protection measures against COVID-19 and attitude towards COVID-19 vaccination, access to healthcare, the effect of the pandemic etc.
- UNICEF, in partnership with the Norwegian Government, the Norwegian National Service for Special Needs Education (STATPED) and the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, hosted a series of working meetings on inclusive education, to agree on the final version of the Inclusive Education Supporting System Model.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>804,571</th>
<th>11,352</th>
<th>82,545</th>
<th>Abkhazia</th>
<th>UNICEF funding gap</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed cases</td>
<td>Confirmed deaths</td>
<td>Child (&lt;18 years) cases</td>
<td>Confirmed cases – 33,693</td>
<td>Confirmed deaths – 498</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(9.52% 14-day positivity rate) | 40,174 |

HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY

- UNICEF continues to work closely with the Government, WHO, and other United Nations and humanitarian partners to provide technical guidance and support. In line with WHO’s COVID-19 Strategic Response Plan, UNICEF is focusing on risk communication; provision of critical hygiene supplies and PPE for frontline workers; and mitigating the secondary effects of the outbreak by facilitating continued access to healthcare, education and child protection services, as well as social protection programmes for children, pregnant, and lactating women.

COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE (C4SC) & EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- UNICEF continues to support the national COVID-19 vaccination process through provision of information about vaccination and debunking the misinformation through multimedia storytelling and media engagement.
- USAID/Georgia and UNICEF renewed their partnership to support the Government of Georgia in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the launch of the programme, the heads of organizations elaborated on how the new project will further support the Government in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and minimizing the overall impact of the pandemic through: risk communication and community engagement; improved infection, prevention and control measures and water, sanitation and hygiene services; and provision of critical equipment and supplies to strengthen health services for the prevention and management of COVID-19, including COVID-19 vaccination and eHealth services.
• UNICEF, with support from USAID and in partnership with the Association of Immunization and Vaccinology (AIVA), engaged students specializing in the field of medicine from five different universities in Georgia in a 6-month campaign to share information on and to promote the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

• In partnership with the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs (MoIDPOTLHSA), the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES) and the National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC), UNICEF continues to organize information sessions for teachers across the country. The information sessions were held for teachers in Imereti, Mtskheta-Tianeti, Racha and Samegrelo regions, where prominent health experts met with teachers to provide them with information on COVID-19 vaccination and answered their questions. The teachers were given an opportunity to get vaccinated against COVID-19 following the meeting.

• UNICEF’s campaign #იცერითმასწავლებელი to engage teachers and school administrators in the national vaccination programme continued with stories of three teachers from Imereti region, sharing their experience about getting vaccinated.

• Nurses in eight regions of Georgia are attending the information sessions on COVID-19 vaccination, organized by UNICEF in partnership with the Nursing Association Numane. During these information sessions, nurses receive precise answers on vaccination issues from the prominent doctors, and are followed by voluntary vaccination of nurses and other hospital personnel.

• Within the framework of the Media Literacy Week and in partnership with the National Communication Commission, UNICEF Representative met with students of public school #123 in Tbilisi to talk about the importance of media literacy and the resources which exist for children to identify and fight disinformation, especially regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccination process.

• Socially disadvantaged young people are improving their digital skills and employment prospects by taking part in the ‘Real-Time Jobs for Youth’ trainings organized by UNICEF and UNDP. The initiative is tailored to the needs of young people who are about to leave state care and start independent lives.

• UNICEF Representative in Georgia, Ghassan Khalil, met with the newly-elected Mayor of Borjomi, Otar Arbolishvili with whom he discussed promotion of vaccination in Borjomi municipality. He also met with the newly-created Child Rights Unit at the municipality of Borjomi, where they discussed the role of local municipalities in the implementation of Child Rights Code.

To celebrate World Children's Day and the anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF organizes the activity called "Kids Take Over" in many countries across the globe. On 19 November, UNICEF Representative in Georgia, Ghassan Khalil met with the school kids of Borjomi Public School No.3, who participated in UNICEF-organized worldwide event, #KidsTakeOver. Older schoolchildren took a place of their school principal and their teachers, managed the school activities and organized lessons for their younger schoolmates. The schoolkids shared their thoughts about child rights, inclusion in the process of decision-making and the experience they gained today during the event when they were managing the school processes.

UNICEF Representative in Georgia, Dr. Ghassan Khalil with the schoolchildren of Borjomi Public School No.3

HEALTH, NUTRITION & WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE (WASH)

• UNICEF continues to support the Government of Georgia in creating a safe learning environment for children, teachers and school administrators throughout the country. With a contribution in-kind from SARAYA Co. Ltd. (Japan), UNICEF handed over 140 tons of alcohol-based hand sanitizers to the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia to reinforce hygiene practices in schools. The handover event at Gori Public School No. 3 was attended by the Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Georgia - Ms. Eka Dgebuadze, H.E. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan, Mr. Imamura Akira,
and UNICEF Representative in Georgia, Dr. Ghassan Khalil. The products were distributed in 2,080 public schools across Georgia.

UNICEF continues its partnership with Global Initiative on Psychiatry-Tbilisi (GIP-T) to support adolescent mental health as they return to school during the COVID-19 Pandemic”. The project has so far trained 20 selected peer educators through 6-days interactive face-to-face training sessions held in Batumi by the experts of psychosocial service centre “Synergy-Batumi”. With their support, the trained peer educators conducted training for 554 school students from Adjara high mountainous villages. Trainings for 20 peer educators from Tbilisi public schools are underway.

UNICEF is partnering the NGO ‘Gambling Research and Ludomania Prevention Center’ (GRAPC) to prevent gambling among adolescents of Georgia. The initiative aims to prevent the onset of at-risk gambling behavior among 14-18 years old adolescents through face-to-face trainings, public events and social media. To date, 525 school students from selected schools from 10 cities participated in face-to-face trainings focusing on the risk factors and consequences of gambling, statistics of gambling losses, extreme addiction potential, online gambling and prevention measures, conducted by psychologists. The project will continue with online trainings in those schools that are closed due to COVID-19 infection cases.

A quantitative survey on adolescent’s knowledge, attitude and practice towards gambling is also being conducted within the project in collaboration with the research organization ANOVA LTD. The survey will cover 1,100 schoolchildren.

In partnership with MoES, UNICEF started a project to improve the knowledge of 11-12 grade schoolchildren in various social and psycho-emotional issues, scale up their resilience and prepare them for real-life challenges, including current COVID-19 crisis and the post-crisis period.

UNICEF established a partnership with the NGO Helping Hand to engage young people in COVID-19 response. Through this partnership 10,000 adolescents will be engaged across 69 rural districts in Georgia through various adolescent-led interventions to raise awareness of infection prevention and control and prevent the spread of COVID-19.
CHILD PROTECTION

- UNICEF, in partnership with the EU, supported a 2-day workshop/professional supervision meeting for mediators of the Diversion and Mediation Programme in Georgia. The meeting was attended by the Deputy Minister of Justice, management staff from the Diversion and Mediation programme and mediators working within the Diversion and Mediation programme throughout the country. Issues related to quality assurance of mediation process, online mediation, expansion of mediation to the criminal justice proceedings and other important matters were discussed at the meeting. Mediators received professional supervision from experienced professionals.

- A training of professionals of the integrated services Barnahus was held within the framework of Estonia-UNICEF partnership to support the Government of Georgia to strengthen the system for effective prevention and response to crime and violence committed against children. The training participants included professionals from the following agencies: Ministry of Internal Affairs, Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia, State Care Agency, Samkharauli Examination Bureau, State Inspector, Chairman of the Interagency Commission. The training was launched by the UNICEF Representative in Georgia and Ambassador of Estonia.

- UNICEF continues to support MoIDPOTLHSA and the State Care Agency in partnership with the Georgian Association of Social Workers (GASW) in the deinstitutionalization process. A multidisciplinary team of social workers and psychologists are working countrywide to assess and provide crisis intervention for children who left Ninotsminda boarding school and their families, with 38 children assessed and supported.

- UNICEF continues supporting the State Care Agency to strengthen the quality of social work through strengthening and institutionalising case management, supervision, specialization models for social workers, as well as formulation of suicide prevention protocol and instruments. UNICEF, together with Columbia University, is finalising the training module for the social service workforce on interpersonal communication and community engagement. Consultations have been conducted with the key stakeholders and preparatory work for the adaptation of the training module has started.

- UNICEF, in partnership with the State Agency for Religious Issues, organized a two-day seminar on child rights for 17 representatives of seven religious denominations. In addition, a two-day seminar was organized by the Patriarchy of Georgia and UNICEF for the representatives of the Orthodox Church. The main topics of these seminars were child rights and the role of religious leaders in promoting child rights, and included the general principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Code on the Rights of the Child; stages of psychological development of children and impact of violence on children; importance of healthy lifestyle for young people and protection of children amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and vaccination. The role of religious leaders is crucial in advancing and protecting children’s rights as they are close to their communities, children and their families, hence they are able to achieve positive changes in society by promoting child rights.
SOCIAL PROTECTION

- UNICEF, together with its partner organization MAC Georgia, formed a Disability Advisory Committee consisting of persons (and children) with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities. Based on the principle “nothing about us without us”, the objective of this forum is to discuss and inform all actions related to UNICEF’s work in disability area within the project. Two meetings of the Committee have already taken place.

- UNICEF, in partnership with MoIDPOTLHSA and GASW, organized a two-day working meeting about the transformation of the assessment system for persons with disabilities and optimization of their social protection measures. The goal of the meeting was to discuss current actions within this initiative and agree on future plans.

- UNICEF held series of online meetings with the representatives of the Tbilisi, Kutaisi and Batumi municipalities to develop city action plans in the frame of the Child Friendly City Initiative; this initiative calls to transform cities into safe and child-centred spaces conducive for harmonious development of children and youth.

- With financial support from USAID and in partnership with Geostat, data collection for the fifth wave of the Real Time Monitoring Survey was completed at the end of October. The survey collected data on self-protection measures against COVID-19, attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccination and access to healthcare. Data processing and analysis of the data from the fifth wave is underway and will be available on 30 November 2021.

- The topics of the sixth wave of the Real Time Monitoring Survey were chosen and the questionnaire has been finalized. The fieldwork of the sixth wave of the survey will be conducted in December 2021.

EDUCATION

- UNICEF continues supporting nine state universities in developing Bachelor’s (BA) programmes for prospective preschool educators. Alongside the thematic training sessions launched in September, university professors participated in eight thematic workshops conducted in October and are receiving individual support for finalizing BA programmes and course syllabi. In addition, UNICEF acquired 33 recent publications on early childhood education for libraries of 9 state universities. Access to publications in the state universities will expedite the process of accreditation of BA programmes in universities.

- With the support of the Government of Norway and in partnership with MoES, UNICEF continues to improve quality and inclusion in preschool education through capacity building of municipal representatives in 11 target municipalities across Georgia. Educational and development resources were delivered to 20 pilot kindergartens, followed by training and coaching of caregivers aimed to strengthen early inclusive education in Georgia.

- UNICEF, with the support of the Government of Norway and in partnership with National Centre for Teacher Professional Development (TPDC), continues to support pilot preschools for improving quality and inclusion in early childhood education. UNICEF, in partnership with TPDC, will continue supporting 12 preschools through regular practice-based coaching of staff on quality standards and inclusion of children with special needs.

- As part of its advocacy campaign to reduce the digital divide and the learning crisis, UNICEF is working with three schools to establish a new model of computer laboratories. Public schools in villages Makhuntseti, Adjara; Bakhvi, Guria; and Zestaponi will serve as models for other schools in the country to create hubs for children with no internet access to get connected and use the digital resources in their learning.
• School teachers, students and field professionals are being awarded prizes for participation in the child rights contest of the second International Conference on Incorporation of Child Rights into University Curricula, held in Batumi. Teachers and students from 4 schools of Imereti region presented their projects to the UNICEF Representative. The prize was also delivered to Barbare (Vara) Galibini, mother of 8 children, author of the second prize winner essay.

• On 8-11 November, UNICEF hosted a series of working meetings on inclusive education in partnership with Norwegian Government, the Norwegian National Service for Special Needs Education (STATPED) and the MoES. Georgian specialists on inclusive education participated in the meetings to discuss the Inclusive Education Supporting System Model, developed by STATPED. The model places particular emphasis on improving access to quality and inclusive education for the most vulnerable children, children with special educational needs and disabilities.

MONTHLY FOCUS: USAID/Georgia and UNICEF renewed partnership to respond to COVID-19

USAID/Georgia and UNICEF renewed their partnership to support the Government of Georgia in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The new one-year programme is a continuation of a fruitful cooperation between the two organizations which resulted in reaching over 1.9 million people in Georgia in 2020 with important messages on how to protect themselves and their families from COVID-19 and mitigating the impact of COVID-19.

The programme will support the Government of Georgia and health authorities in implementing the COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement Strategy with a focus on addressing vaccine hesitancy and enhancing demand for vaccination. This will include outreach to influential groups such as teachers and school/preschool personnel, health workers, religious and community leaders in all regions of Georgia with targeted pro-vaccination messages delivered through community outreach, as well as using media and digital platforms. In addition, to counter disinformation and further spread correct information about COVID-19 risks and prevention mechanisms, UNICEF will work with young people to enhance their skills in digital literacy and to proactively debunk fake news. UNICEF will continue obtaining real time data to monitor the impact of the pandemic on children and families. Preschools, schools and health facilities in Georgia will be provided with hygiene and other infection prevention supplies and COVID-19 protective hygiene practices will be promoted among students, teachers, and young people.

Strengthening the existing e-Health infrastructure and technologies will further empower rural primary healthcare professionals to effectively manage suspected cases of COVID-19. UNICEF will also support the Government in strengthening the COVID-19 vaccine cold chain at central and local levels, with a focus on improving decentralized vaccine storage.

The first partnership project on responding to COVID-19 emergency was implemented in 2020-2021 and contributed to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 infection and lessen the anticipated socioeconomic impact on the most vulnerable children and families.
“Together, we will strengthen Georgia’s ability to get safe and effective vaccines to the people who need them most.”  - Peter Wiebler, Mission Director of USAID/Georgia

“Thanks to USAID for their continuous support. Children, families and communities will further benefit from our renewed partnership.”  - Ghassan Khalil, UNICEF Representative in Georgia.

The launch of the programme was livestreamed through social media platforms of both organizations, during which heads of organizations elaborated on how the new project will further support the Government in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and minimizing the overall impact of the pandemic through: risk communication and community engagement; improved infection, prevention and control measures and water, sanitation and hygiene services; and provision of critical equipment and supplies to strengthen health services for the prevention and management of COVID-19, including COVID-19 vaccination and eHealth services.

**FUNDING 2021**

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<th>Funding Gap</th>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
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<td>Health, Nutrition and WASH</td>
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<td>Social Protection</td>
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<td>Risk Communication and Community Engagement</td>
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<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3,648,898</strong></td>
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**PARTNERSHIPS**

UNICEF wishes to express its gratitude to donors supporting its response to COVID-19: Bulgaria, Estonia, the European Union, Korea, Norway, SIDA, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and USAID.

The next Situation Report will be issued on 15 December 2021.

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