The Congo is prone to annual flooding and remains at risk due to a potential spillover of the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo – threats that are compounded by the ongoing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. There are also 170,000 asylum seekers and 48,400 refugees from the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda currently in the Congo, and over 77,000 internally displaced persons in the Pool region.

UNICEF will deliver an integrated package of interventions in health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education and protection. In addition to delivering essential services for children under 5 years, school-aged children and pregnant and lactating women, UNICEF will build the capacities of service providers and caregivers to participate in the response.

UNICEF is requesting US$11.9 million to meet the humanitarian needs of at-risk people in the Congo in 2021.

More than 70,000 children were affected by floods along the Oubangui and Congo rivers in 2020. UNICEF provided life-saving health, WASH and nutrition interventions to affected people.
The humanitarian situation in the Congo is characterized by the presence of asylum seekers and refugees from nearby countries; internal displacement following the 2016 presidential elections and the conflict in the Pool region; heightened risk of Ebola outbreaks along the river corridor bordering the Democratic Republic of the Congo, an area frequently affected by floods; and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. An estimated 1.2 million people – more than half of whom are children – will need humanitarian assistance in 2021.

Displacement remains a significant challenge. The Likouala region is hosting more than 27,000 refugees from the Central African Republic and 21,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo are settled in Bétou district. In Likouala, access to safe water and sanitation services is limited: only 48 per cent of households have access to adequate sanitation and 64 per cent have access to protected water sources. The Plateaux region is hosting nearly 8,500 asylum-seekers who fled deadly intercommunal conflict in the Mai-Ndombe Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in December 2018. One third of the asylum-seekers are children in need of psychosocial support and education. More than 77,000 internally displaced persons (50 per cent children) have returned home following the 2018 ceasefire agreements in the Pool region. These populations are struggling to access basic social services.

Nearly 170,000 people were affected by the 2019 flooding due to torrential rains in Cuvette, Likouala, Plateaux and Sangha departments. These regions, which are vulnerable to cholera and hosting refugees and asylum seekers, are also at risk of a potential spillover of the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, nearly 74,000 children under 5 years are suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM).

### Sector Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Number of People Needing Assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>967,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
<td>967,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>560,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.3 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Story from the Field

Monica, 12, lives in Bétou, Likouala region, an area that was severely flooded in 2019 following a period of heavy rains. The Congo is prone to flooding, which affects over 120,000 people every year. "Before the floods my family had no toilets and we used to go to the small forest behind our house", says Monica. "After the rains everything was very dirty and smelled bad and my brothers did not know where to play."

"Then one day, things started to change”. UNICEF and partners are engaging community members in Bétou to improve WASH conditions.

Read more about this story here

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UNICEF is providing assistance to 170,000 people – including 86,730 children – who face multiple challenges in flood-affected areas of Likouala region.
In 2021, UNICEF will deliver an integrated package of interventions to affected populations, including life-saving health and nutrition services; water and sanitation facilities; support to adopt key hygiene practices; child protection services; and quality education.

In collaboration with partners, the response will revolve around three key strategies: (1) building the capacities of service providers and caregivers; (2) supporting timely and effective service delivery of essential health, nutrition, WASH, protection and education interventions, especially for children under 5 years and pregnant and lactating women and children of school-age; and (3) providing supplies.

As the sector lead agency for nutrition, WASH and education, UNICEF will help strengthen coordination among sector partners, particularly at the sub-national level, and will continue to support care for children with SAM and infant and young child feeding services in the country’s 12 regions. As co-lead for protection, UNICEF will build the capacities of the Government and civil society partners to prevent and respond to all types of violence, including gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse.

To strengthen the linkages between humanitarian action and development programmes, UNICEF will reinforce community resilience and systems and build the capacities of implementing partners and Government counterparts. This will include strengthening the national data collection system.

Given that Ebola continues to reemerge in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNICEF will intensify efforts to prevent the disease in vulnerable communities and border areas. To strengthen preparedness, UNICEF will support communities to prevent Ebola infection through community engagement, risk communication and surveillance in high-risk areas.

In 2021, all indicators will be disaggregated by sex and age in order to better understand and target the different needs of men, women, children, boys and girls and respond with a gender equality, life-cycle and equity approaches. Awareness-raising activities on good health practices will target not only women, but also men to ensure shared responsibility.

Progress against the 2020 programme targets is available in the humanitarian situation reports: https://www.unicef.org/appeals/congo/situation-reports

This appeal is aligned with the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which are based on global standards and norms for humanitarian action.
FUNDING REQUIREMENTS IN 2021

UNICEF is requesting US$11.9 million to meet the needs of over 466,000 children and their families in Cuvette, Likouala, Plateaux and Pool regions and cover additional requirements related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the overlapping emergencies of COVID-19, Ebola risk and flood risk, and the challenging operating environment and weak social service infrastructure, UNICEF requires additional funding to provide an adequate health, child protection and education response in the Congo. This funding will enable UNICEF to provide critical life-saving and life-sustaining interventions and contribute to preventing and detecting Ebola cases. Without this funding, UNICEF will be unable to save the lives of thousands of children at risk due to SAM and communicable and other diseases such as measles, cholera, diarrhoea and pneumonia. Lack of funding will also result in the failure to provide much-needed and critical child protection and education services to the most vulnerable children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>2021 requirements (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>4,201,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>1,590,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
<td>2,031,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child protection, GBVIE and PSEA</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social protection and cash transfers</td>
<td>400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4D, community engagement and AAP</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparedness and disaster reduction</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,922,435</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This includes costs from other sectors/interventions: C4D, community engagement and AAP (4.2%), Preparedness and disaster reduction (4.2%), Social protection and cash transfers (3.4%).

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2. Ibid.

3. This figure was calculated using the total children to be reached (466,557) and 140,444 adults, which represents 53 per cent of the highest coverage WASH target. This figure includes 315,661 women/girls (52 per cent) and 291,380 men/boys (48 per cent). This also includes 6,498 people with disabilities (1.4 per cent), based on United Nations, 'Evaluation des impacts économiques et sociaux de la pandémie COVID-19 en République du Congo', August 2020. UNICEF is committed to needs-based targeting, which means covering the unmet needs of children; and will serve as the provider of last resort where it has cluster coordination responsibilities.

4. This figure was calculated using the highest coverage education target of 448,210 children aged 3 to 17 years and 18,387 children under 2 years (9.5 per cent of 193,549 children under 5 years to be reached with polio vaccination). This includes 242,630 girls (52 per cent) and 223,967 boys (48 per cent). This includes also 6,532 children with disabilities (1.4 per cent), based on 'Evaluation des impacts économiques et sociaux de la pandémie COVID-19 en République du Congo'.

5. 'Evaluation des impacts économiques et sociaux de la pandémie COVID-19 en République du Congo'.

6. 'Evaluation des impacts économiques et sociaux de la pandémie COVID-19 en République du Congo'.


8. UNHCR projections for 2020.

9. Ibid.


14. 'Evaluation des impacts économiques et sociaux de la pandémie COVID-19 en République du Congo'.

15. Ibid.

16. Education Sector COVID-19 Response Plan, April 2020

17. 'Evaluation des impacts économiques et sociaux de la pandémie COVID-19 en République du Congo'.

18. This is based on a SAM burden of 74,000 children and a targeted coverage rate of 50 per cent.

19. Due to space constraints, the following acronyms appear in the appeal: GBViE (gender-based violence in emergencies); PSEA (prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse); Cd4 (communication for development); and AAP (accountability to affected populations).

20. The remaining needs will be covered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Azur Development (a local non-governmental organization) and Eglise Evangelique du Congo (a religious organization).

21. UNICEF Congo does not have significant experience providing cash transfers in emergencies. The 2021 experience will be a model for scaling up the intervention in the future. In 2021, the remaining needs will be covered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action, UNFPA, Azur Development and Eglise Evangelique du Congo.

22. This includes US$950,000 for gender-based violence in emergencies interventions; US$500,000 for child protection interventions; and US$50,000 for prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse interventions.

23. The Congo's 2017 funding requirements are embedded in the 2017 regional appeal for West and Central Africa.