UNICEF Georgia COVID-19 Situation Report
20 November 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

• World Children’s Day, 20 November 2020, was celebrated this week. The UNICEF Representative made a video address from Akhaltsikhe, where he met with children and young people to discuss the challenges they are experiencing, as well as their vision for the future; And UNICEF National Ambassador Nikoloz Rachveli, called on Government, private sector and civil society to unite for children in these challenging times - For more information, please see WEEKLY FOCUS on page 4.
• UNICEF, with financial support from USAID, launched a new initiative to enhance COVID-19 related risk communication among young people.
• UNICEF’s partner, Children of Georgia (CoG), provided online psychological support to 410 children and 329 caregivers in small group homes and foster care through group and individual sessions.
• UNICEF’s partner, Adjara Organization of Georgia Scout’s Movement, provided training on COVID-19 prevention measures to 415 students in 10 rural public schools in Adjara region.
• UNICEF’s partner, Global Initiative in Psychiatry (GIP) continued online training sessions on psychosocial issues for students and teachers of Adjara and Gori public schools reaching 952 students and 134 teachers.
• UNICEF delivered agricultural equipment to 78 households, reaching 251 children and 212 adults in Abkhazia region.
• UNICEF provided food parcels, hygiene supplies and basic medical kits to 398 families in need, including 2,231 children and 989 adults in the Abkhazia region.

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) and External Communications

• World Children’s Day, 20 November 2020, was celebrated this week, with a number of initiatives from UNICEF focusing on the prioritization of children in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The UNICEF Representative made a video address from Akhaltsikhe, where he met with children and young people to discuss the challenges they are experiencing, as well as their vision for the future.
• For World Children’s Day, UNICEF National Ambassador Nikoloz Rachveli, called on Government, private sector and civil society to unite for children in these challenging times.
• Children took over UNICEF’s Instagram account and shared their stories. Three young people also took over the UNICEF all staff meeting

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

96,860
Confirmed cases

894
Confirmed deaths

1,327
Child (<18 years) cases

2,226
Quarantined

Abkhazia
Confirmed cases – 5,278
Confirmed deaths – 67

UNICEF funding gap
US$ 1,841,399 (42%)

Celebrating the World’s Children’s Day with young people from the youth centre in Akhaltsikhe, discussing challenges of the pandemic, the ways of overcoming them and #reimagining a better world for children.
this week, participating in the discussions and sharing their opinions on priority areas when working for children amid the pandemic.

- **Internet safety guidelines** for children reached nearly 31,000 parents across Georgia. The guidance note included useful information for parents on how to advise children on the safe use of the internet while online. The webinar on how to protect children online outlined more practical tips and recommendations for parents.

- **Nine regional TV channels** actively promote COVID-19 protective measures, existing state regulations and other relevant information. “Lean more about COVID-19”, aired with financial support from USAID, and has already broadcasted 185 editions in Georgian and 140 programs in minority languages.

- UNICEF, with financial support from USAID, launched a new initiative to enhance COVID-19 related risk communication among young people. The project will train 60 young students across Georgia to act as health ambassadors and share information on COVID-19 protective measures and healthcare tips among their peers. The young people will also be educated on how to use internet safely, especially with the news related to the pandemic. Trilingual social media toolkits and explainers on a wide range of COVID-19 related topics, as well as videos from peer influencers will assist them in being the multipliers of COVID-19 related news among their friends and family members online and during face-to-face communication.

- To help parents and children cope with school and kindergarten closures, UNICEF supported the development of videos “How to talk to children under 6 about COVID-19” and “How to plan daily routines for children between 6 and 12 years”.

- UNICEF re-activated a social media campaign reminding people about safety and prevention measures against the pandemic via Facebook cards for adults, as well as posters (Poster 1, Poster2, Poster 3, Poster 4) for children.

- A video on home-based care for COVID-19 patients with mild symptoms was developed and set for broadcasting via local TV channels and social media in Abkhazia, Georgia.

- UNICEF risk communication reached 127,594 people through Facebook on COVID-19 issues.

**Health, Nutrition and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**

- Through its partnership with the Emergency Situations Coordination and Urgent Assistance Centre, UNICEF continues work to establish a centralized communication platform for rural primary health care doctors and equip them with relevant COVID-19 prevention and treatment information and tools. A single centralized directory of all rural doctors was developed, and UNICEF has already procured and delivered hardware for the communication platform to the Emergency Department.

- Assessment of COVID-19 prevention and control measures is complete in regional maternities and is now underway in Tbilisi-based maternities.

- The first batch of surface sanitizers, procured with the support of USAID, is delivered to the Ministry of Education for further distribution. Part of the items were delivered to Akhalkalaki Education Resource Centre for the public schools located in the region.

- The WASH expert, seconded by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), provided technical oversight for the construction works of WASH facilities in three schools in Abkhazia, Georgia.

**Adolescents/youth**

- During the reporting period, youth volunteers contributed 2,030 hours to peer education, distance learning, volunteering with homeless children, supporting homeless and elderly citizens, conducting an information campaign on volunteering issues, popularizing the idea of volunteering, organizing entertainment meetings with the involvement of the local community to reduce the stress caused by the pandemic, showing movies, information campaigns to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 infection, sewing and distributing reusable masks, sports activities for young people, online creative competitions; charitable activities, assistance to socially vulnerable families, cognitive activities for people with disabilities and etc.

- Several training sessions and webinars were conducted on youth and intergenerational volunteering, reaching 3,600 people.

- 130 volunteer stories were prepared and disseminated through Facebook, reaching 49,146 people.

- UNICEF’s partner, Global Initiative in Psychiatry (GIP), continued a series of online webinars for adolescents and their parents, covering the following topics: effective communication with adolescents, psychosomatic presentations, diseases and prevention of digital technology overuse, and gambling among adolescents.
- GIP continued online psychosocial support for adolescents including 155 consultations for adolescents and 44 consultations with parents.
- The GIP continued online training sessions regarding psychosocial issues for students and teachers of Adjara and Gori public schools, reaching 952 students and 134 teachers.
- UNICEF’s partner, Adjara Organization of Georgia Scout’s Movement, visited 10 selected mountainous public schools of Adjara region to provide 415 students with face-to-face trainings on COVID-19 prevention measures with the guidance of a medical doctor with extensive knowledge and experience in public health.
- The Kant’s Academy carried out an online assessment and produced the report on adolescents’ current needs, challenges, their views on the future and how they see themselves in a new changed world.
- Kant’s Academy initiated the training of adolescents on Gambling, its risks and consequences on adolescent’s development and fake news, reaching over 120 adolescents from Akhalkalaki district, and 100 peer educators participated in the interactive sessions conducted by the expert of the Gambling Research and Ludomania Prevention Center. It is anticipated that the peer educators will organize and lead the trainings for their peers in their respective communities on gambling, ludomania and its prevention.

Child Protection

- In partnership with the Parliament and the State Care Agency, the UNICEF-supported child hotline “111” continues to assist children and their families, supporting 1,292 cases to date, of which 1,182 already received assistance and were closed accordingly.
- UNICEF’s partner, Children of Georgia (CoG), provided online psychological support to 410 children and 329 caregivers in small group homes and foster care through group and individual sessions.
- UNICEF partner, Initiatives for Social Change (ISC), provided training and supervision for 13 mediators from the National Agency for Crime Prevention and Probation enabling the provision of online mediation. UNICEF Representative and the Head of the National Agency for Crime Prevention and Probation visited the Mediation House to observe the progress in securing continuation of mediation services.
- A Facebook page to support parents of children with disabilities continues to provide practical information, one-to-one counseling with specialists, and chats for parents and caregivers, engaging more than 160,000 people.
- UNICEF partner, RHEA, delivered sessions on sports, art therapy, and puppet workshops to young people with disabilities in Akhalkalaki Centre.
- UNICEF organized a partners’ meeting to take stock of the interventions aimed at addressing the child protection issues related to the pandemic.
- To support food security of vulnerable families living in rural areas of the Abkhazia region, UNICEF delivered agricultural equipment to 78 households, reaching 251 children and 212 adults.
- UNICEF provided food parcels, hygiene supplies and basic medical kits to 398 families in need, including 2,231 children and 989 adults in the Abkhazia region.
- UNICEF delivered PPE to social service providers in the Abkhazia region.

Social Policy

- UNICEF, with LEPL Social Services Agency (SSA), carried out a workshop to identify the needs for the continued delivery of safe services to the most vulnerable populations amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In preparation for real-time monitoring of the effects of COVID-19 on families, a 5 day-training was conducted for the data collectors, along with piloting of the questionnaire and technology for application of the entire real-time monitoring survey.

Education

- UNICEF Representative co-facilitated a workshop at the Local Action Group (LAG) education center in Akhalkalaki, bringing together over 20 representatives of community-based organizations to cover topics of occupational safety, child labor and child rights, including in the context of COVID-19.
- Elementary school teachers, school administrators, and educators from 100 schools in Georgia are being trained in distance teaching and learning as part of a partnership between the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia, the Government of Estonia, and UNICEF Georgia.
WEEKLY FOCUS: WORLD CHILDREN’S DAY

On World Children’s Day - 20 November, UNICEF believes that the most vulnerable families and children should be prioritized in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of the virus on children and young people is becoming increasingly alarming. Children face multiple threats: apart from the direct consequences of the disease itself, they are threatened by an interruption in essential services, as well as increasing poverty and inequality.

UNICEF Representative: “The COVID-19 crisis is a child rights crisis. The costs of the pandemic for children are immediate, and if unaddressed, may persist throughout their lives.”

This year, most of the events and activities of World Children’s Day were organized online, which allowed children and young people to express themselves and to reimagine their futures. The day was also marked by the launching of a child-friendly chatbot on the UNICEF Facebook page, which was made to support children and young people in getting trustworthy information about the COVID-19 pandemic, prevention measures, and regulations. The chatbot will also educate children about violence and where and how to report cases of violence. It will serve as a tool to divert children and young people to relevant services and helplines, in case of need.

To advocate for the rights of the children, UNICEF Representative Ghassan Khalil, with other professionals from UNICEF Georgia, celebrated World Children’s Day in Akhalkalaki, a town mostly inhabited by the ethnic minority populations in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region. UNICEF met with young people from the region and discussed challenges and concerns, as well as ideas on how to solve these problems. The meeting was organized in the main park of the town, where young people displayed their drawings and photographs, which they created as part of the World Children’s Day celebration. The theme of the exhibition was “How I imagine my future – a better world after COVID-19”.

As part of World Children’s Day, UNICEF asked supporters to raise their voices in solidarity with the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children by helping ‘turn the world blue’. In Georgia, three cities joined in the initiative at Tbilisi’s iconic landmarks, the TV tower, Batumi’s new stadium, and the State Drama Theatre of Kutaisi, as they were lit blue on 20 November. In 2020, all three cities have joined the UNICEF-led Child-Friendly Cities Initiative pledging that children be at the very heart of the city’s agenda.

Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Areas</th>
<th>Funding Needs</th>
<th>Funds Identified</th>
<th>Funding Gap</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>282,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
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<td>Health, Nutrition and WASH</td>
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<td>1,412,099</td>
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<td>Social Policy</td>
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<td>241,950</td>
<td>158,050</td>
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<td>Risk Communication and Community Engagement</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,415,399</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,574,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,841,399</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 4 December 2020

Contacts for further information:

Ghassan Khalil,
Representative
Mobile: +995 591 225 281
Email: gkhalil@unicef.org

Amy Clancy,
Deputy Representative
Mobile: +995 551 548 170
Email: aclancy@unicef.org

Maya Kurtsikidze,
Communications Officer
Mobile: +995 599 533 071
Email: mkurtsikidze@unicef.org

Elene Karseladze,
Reports Assistant
Mobile: +995 555 900 966
Email: ekarseladze@unicef.org