Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

Ghana continues to have the second highest number of coronavirus cases in the West and Central Africa Region, according to the most recent reported figures (as of 30th November), with the 10th highest number of cases behind Nigeria, Libya, Algeria, Kenya, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Morocco and South Africa. The number of people confirmed to have contracted the virus in Ghana now stands at 51,667 cases.

In keeping with global trends, Ghana has witnessed an increase in the number of people who have contracted the coronavirus.

The President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, addressed the nation on 8th November. He noted the rise of active cases, reiterated the importance of adhering to COVID-19 safety protocols and indicated that measures to test, trace and treat would be enhanced.

A study conducted by Child Rights International has revealed that a total of 2,180 children between the ages of 0 to 18 years contracted COVID-19 in Ghana, from March 11th to November 9th, 2020.
UNICEF’s COVID-19 response

In support of the Government of Ghana’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF has been working with the United Nations Country Team, Development Partners, international and national non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and national civil society organizations (CSOs) to promote best practices, provide technical assistance in line with global standards and support the continuity of services across social sectors.

Health

To ensure continuity of essential services, including immunization campaigns, UNICEF supported the Ghana Health Service (GHS) to implement a yellow fever immunization campaign in 14 out of 16 regions between 12th and 18th November. The campaign had been delayed in part because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

A total of 85 districts participated in the campaign. UNICEF provided financial support for the social mobilisation component, for the printing of 170,000 copies of field monitoring tools, as well as technical support during the planning, implementation and monitoring phase. A total of 5.6 million Ghanaians aged between 10 and 60 years were targeted.

Nutrition

UNICEF has procured essential nutrition supplies for the prevention of malnutrition and the early detection and management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). The supplies will benefit 115,112 children in the North East Region. Additionally, over 600 health workers have been trained in Greater Accra on how to continue providing essential health and nutrition services and on management of SAM in the context of COVID-19 measures.

Screening at community level in the Greater Accra region is ongoing to identify children with acute malnutrition who require treatment. Plans are underway to build the capacity of over 6,000 health workers in the Eastern region. Training will focus on the new guidelines on maternal and child health and nutrition, the use of micronutrient powders to improve quality of diets of young children, and appropriate use of the Mother and Child Health Record Book.

In an effort to maintain the quality of essential services, under Phase II of the implementation of the Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) Quality of Care (QoC) programme, UNICEF is working with WHO and the Ghana Health Service (GHS) to scale up the programme in five regions – Ashanti, Bono East, Western, Upper East and Upper West Regions.

Eighty-eight (88) health staff from the five regions were trained in September-October 2020 as regional resource persons to support the implementation of the strategic objectives of the global Quality Equity and Dignity (QED) network. This cuts across four areas – Leadership, Action, Learning and Accountability for quality MNCH, scaling up interventions from 13 to 22 districts.
**Water Sanitation and Hygiene**

As part of the WASH COVID-19 response strategy, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Sanitation are being equipped with skills and logistics to produce handwashing facilities and hand cleansing products to complement and enhance behaviour change. This is expected to increase local capacities to produce affordable handwashing devices and products and make them easily accessible to all.

Thirty-two artisans from eight regions with the worst rates of open defecation in Ghana attended eight days of technical and business enhancement training on production of various types of handwashing devices.

The trainees, who are master craftsmen in metal welding, are expected to go back to their various workplaces to commence commercial production of handwashing devices.

Through the NBSSI, 50 selected members of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) from the Oti, Central, Northern and North East regions completed a four-day training on soap production. The trainees were also equipped with start-up tool kits to enable them to commence production immediately after the training.

This is expected to increase availability of affordable soap and other cleaning products in the local market to enhance handwashing practices. These trainings form part of the WASH programme’s private sector engagement strategy in sanitation and hygiene service delivery.
UNICEF conducted two media sensitization workshops on the topic of the impact of COVID-19 on children in Ghana in Greater Accra and Northern Regions. A total of 26 journalists from well-established media houses in Ghana participated, and received briefings from UNICEF on how the short-, medium- and long-term impact of COVID-19 has affected children in Ghana.

In November, UNICEF also worked with the Department of Children, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), Plan International, World Vision International and other partners to celebrate World Children’s Day. Activities to mark this important anniversary were conducted with adherence to COVID-19 protocols. The theme of this year’s World Children’s Day was ‘Reimagine a Better Future’.

The presentation of the COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience programme in the Education Sector, received a significant amount of online interest.

UNICEF - in collaboration with UNFPA and WFP - convened a tutorial session with 30 young people via Zoom to discuss mental health, nutrition and skills development, and how these areas have been impacted by the pandemic. Young people had an opportunity to exchange views with key stakeholders to better understand how to positively respond to and overcome potential setbacks which COVID-19 may have brought.

UNICEF’s civil society organization partners - Dawah Academy, Behasun, RISE Ghana and the Ghana Red Cross - continued risk communication and community engagement activities. They strengthened the capacity of community health volunteers who take over the sensitization at gatherings and on radio to remind community members of the need to continue observing COVID-19 protocols.
Community health committees were also organized to continue with sensitization on COVID-19 where CSOs were not present.

As a result of the confirmation of new COVID-19 cases in the Upper East region, partners shared COVID-19 preventative messages. Discussions were also held with the religious and traditional leaders to advocate for the use of their platforms to intensify education on COVID-19, and to warn community members on the possibility of a second wave, if protocols are not strictly adhered to.

UNICEF partners engaged Community Information Centres to air COVID-19 preventative jingles. A total of 176,418 people received messages on COVID-19 through these activities. Other interventions included radio discussions, broadcasting in local language, playing of jingles on mobile vans, sensitization at the markets and lorry stations. More than 200 handwashing facilities were positioned at strategic places such as market and lorry parks. Partners held discussions and educated the audience on COVID-19 and the observation of the protocols. They also assisted in disseminating messages about the yellow fever vaccination campaign, which took place in 14 regions between 12-18 November, both on radio and on their various social media platforms.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES), UNICEF and the Mastercard Foundation in Ghana presented the COVID-19 Education Recovery and Resilience Programme. The virtual event brought together over 200 participants from the Government, UN agencies, civil society, development partners, and the media. The event featured speakers from the MoE, GES, UNICEF, and Mastercard Foundation, as well as some youth and adolescents affected by school closures.

In November, to strengthen continuous learning during school closures, UNICEF supported the GES to launch the flagship Ghana Learning Radio Programme broadcasting learning lessons for children kindergarten through primary grade 3. These cover all core areas of the curriculum: local language and English, Science, Social Studies, and Maths.

The programme is currently being aired for one hour a day on national and community radio stations across Ghana on a trial basis before the full launch of radio lessons for kindergarten through junior high school form 3, to be followed by senior high school lessons. Dialogue with community radio stations and the nation broadcasting corporation continues to make additional time slots available for re-airing of lessons.

UNICEF has supported children with supplementary reading materials through a mobile library intervention bringing books to learners in 47 disadvantaged districts to promote reading at household-level.

To support national operationalization of the Safe School Initiative and provide legal backing for its implementation, UNICEF and UNESCO have been supporting the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop a national Safe School Policy. The Policy has been reviewed by a 25-member Technical Working Group (TWG) members within the MoE, GES, MoGCSP,
Many learners have fallen behind during school closures and children with disabilities and special education needs will be at a particular disadvantage when schools re-open.

To address these challenges, 210 National (30) and Master Trainers (180) from across the country and representing different institutions (including Ghana Education Service, Colleges of Education, and NGOs) have gained new knowledge and skills in inclusive instructional methods using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles.

These trainers will support national teaching and learning initiatives, including International Development Association-Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcome Programme (GALOP), targeting 10,000 schools and ongoing Distance Learning programmes targeting all learners, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Ghanaians Against Child Abuse (GACA) campaign continues to reach out to people with information about COVID-19 and child protection related helplines and better parenting messages. The movement reached a total of 1,575,727 people through GACA social media handles (up from 1,424,482 reported in the previous situation report). The number of followers also increased to 36,322. As part of the GACA campaign, 12 recorded messages on COVID-19 and child protection from traditional and religious leaders were broadcast across eight TV stations and 10 radio stations both nationally and at regional level.
These messages are also posted on all GACA social media handles and reaching an estimated 3 million viewers and listeners on average. Messages on national television are estimated to reach 10.5 million viewers during the peak period.

During the reporting period, two training workshops were held on Integrated Social Services, Child Protection Case Management, Inter-sectoral Standard Operating Procedures for child protection and family welfare and the Social Welfare Information Management Systems. Close to 110 social workers from 36 MMDAs (Upper East, Upper West, Northern, Northern East, Savannah, Greater Accra, Oti and Volta regions) attended the workshops.

During the reporting period, 56 cases of children (29 girls, 27 boys) without parental care have been placed in appropriate alternative care. This takes the total of children placed in appropriate alternative and family-based care to 671 since March 2020 (344 girls: 327 boys).

Social Policy & Evidence

UNICEF has recently completed two reports on the primary and secondary impacts of COVID-19 on children and women in Ghana. The first report presents the significant negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children in the short-term with respect to access to essential services, financial distress, food insecurity, mental health, increased risk of exposure to violence and child labour and the negative effects of school closures on children’s learning.

The second report, a brief issue paper, outlines the impacts of the pandemic on children based on existing microdata and analyses of children’s vulnerabilities, as well as on recently collected data, which aim to recurrently monitor the effects of the pandemic. The impacts on children are presented through the lenses of child-relevant social sectors including health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation and child protection with a focus on specific vulnerable groups of children.

Social Protection

The Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) is about to begin temporary transfers to approximately 70,000 particularly vulnerable people who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but who are currently not participating in the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) cash transfer programme. These include homeless people, head porters, women and children living in alleged witch camps, and people with disabilities.

These transfers will be delivered through the national social protection system - using the Ghana National Household Registry data collection, LEAP cash transfer operations, and the Single Window Citizen Engagement Service - to respond to inquiries and resolve any complaints.

The temporary transfers will be delivered in two payments between November 2020 and January 2021 and will test several innovations, including the use of mobile money and deploying SMS messages to communicate with recipients and monitor payments. UNICEF has been working closely with the Ministry and other partners to provide technical and financial assistance to support this effort.

Emergency response to floods

Following heavy rains between August and October, coupled with the spillage of the Bagre Dam in neighbouring Burkina Faso, the Volta River and its tributaries overflowed their banks causing heavy flooding that affected several settler villages along the riverbanks. Most of these villages in the north of Ghana were impacted - with most homes destroyed and thousands of people displaced. The five regions of the north were impacted including the Savannah, North East and Northern regions.

UNICEF provided relief items – including water storage containers, water purification tablets, dignity kits, latrine slabs and tarpaulins - for the Fulani settlement in Daboya, Savannah Region, November 2020. @UNICEF/UN625290/BUTA
UNICEF coordinated with NADMO, the Inter-Agency Working Group on Emergencies and other partners to assess the needs, including through several field visits.

The most vulnerable populations are housed in schools, churches and mosques, or moved to new settlements. In November, the UNICEF team interacted with affected Fulani families in the Daboya settlement, North Gonja District, in the Savannah Region.

UNICEF provided critical supplies to approximately 1,600 displaced people - of which 400 are children - in the three regions. These include tarpaulins, latrine slabs, water storage containers, water purification tablets, soap, buckets, hygiene and dignity items for women. Arrangements are also in progress to provide cash transfers to address the short-to-medium term needs of the most vulnerable flood victims under the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme.

Partnerships and Funding Overview
UNICEF continues to coordinate closely with the UN Country Team in Ghana on joint planning and programme response. As part of the Global UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC), UNICEF in Ghana appealed for US$ 18.2 million to facilitate continued access to essential, quality and inclusive social services and the protection of children and families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the beginning of the crisis, UNICEF has been able to support the national response thanks to the strategic support of development partners and private donors such as the World Bank (PEF), the UK Government, USAID, the Government of Japan, China International Development and Cooperation Agency, the Government of Denmark, Standard Chartered and the Mastercard Foundation. Other development cooperation agencies and partners such as Global Affairs Canada, Netherlands, and KOICA have expressed commitment to further support the delivery of results for children across the country. A total of US$ 5.8 million are still required to fill the continuing gaps (32%) in ensuring a comprehensive and effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, for vulnerable children, young people and families in Ghana.

External Media (Links)

- Ghana; UNICEF, Mastercard To Support Virtual and Distance Learning For Over 9 Million Children - https://www.channel54news.co.ke/edu-ghana/
- Peace FM Radio – news piece – 21st November

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## Annex A - Summary of Programme Results - Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative Indicators - Sector</th>
<th>UNICEF and IPs Response</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2020 target</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Risk Communication and Community Engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RCCE Indicator 1: Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services.</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCCE Indicator 2: Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions.</td>
<td>1,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCCE Indicator 3: Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms.</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Water Sanitation, Hygiene and Infection, Prevention &amp; Control</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC Indicator 1: Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services.</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPC Indicator 2: Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).</td>
<td>2,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC Indicator 3: Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC).</td>
<td>8,800</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuity of Health Care Indicator 1: Number of healthcare providers trained in detecting, referral and appropriate management of COVID-19 cases among children, pregnant and breastfeeding women.</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of Health Care Indicator 2: Number of children &amp; women receiving essential healthcare services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV &amp; GBV* care in UNICEF supported facilities.</td>
<td>403,420</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuity of Health Care Indicator 3: Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms.</td>
<td>300,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 1: Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning.</td>
<td>9,177,934</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 3: Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements.</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 4: Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support.</td>
<td>260,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, CP &amp; GBV Services Indicator 5: Number of UNICEF personnel &amp; partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation &amp; referrals for survivors, including for PSEA*.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Protection</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Protection Indicator 1: Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian multi-sector cash grant for basic needs.</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Indicators</td>
<td>Responses:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>In the last reporting period, what are the top (up to 3) access issues/constraints due to COVID-19 and related response measures, as identified in feedback mechanisms from affected populations, for each of these service areas:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) Health services access</td>
<td>1) Recent upsurge in COVID-19 infections has further heightened the need for health care workers to adhere to all COVID-19 safety protocols in the delivery of essential health services</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) Nutrition services (management of wasting/SAM; nutrition supplements, other services)</td>
<td>1. Less children received growth monitoring and promotion services in the third quarter of 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. 2. Less children (&lt;5 years) were underweight in the third quarter of 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. 3. Reduction in the rate of early initiation of breastfeeding in the third quarter of 2020 (86.5%) compared to the same period in 2019 (87.6%).</td>
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<td>(c) access to food</td>
<td>1. Production of major staples such as maize, rice, sorghum and millet during the 2020/2021 cropping season showed a general increase compared to 2019 and the 5-year averages (Food &amp; Nutrition Bulletin, Nov 2020) 2. Reduction in price of maize in all the major markets except Agbogbloshie and Tamale, which recorded marginal increases of 1.57% and 2.05% respectively. (Food &amp; Nutrition Bulletin, Nov 2020) 3. The severely food insecure households were mostly from the Northern, Ashanti, and Greater Accra regions indicating concern about urban food insecurity (Food &amp; Nutrition Bulletin, Nov 2020).</td>
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<tr>
<td>(d) WASH</td>
<td>1. Sudden increase of COVID-19 cases has re-introduced the need to supply PPEs to Environmental Health Officers and primary health staff. There have also been renewed calls for re-classification of community health workers as &quot;essential services&quot; 2. Message fatigue has begun to set in amongst households as COVID-19 protocol enforcement has been relaxed even though cases have begun to increase again. 3. Reduced operational coordination between WASH and Health Ministries now poses a greater risk as case-count begins to climb.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(e) Education services including continuation of learning options</td>
<td>1. Limited coverage of learners on the radio platform due to limited scope-community / parental / learners engagement initiated to complement efforts - 66 percent of the learners had difficulties accessing the programme as they did not have access to radio, TV, mobile networks and other facilities (GES Rapid Risk Assessment Report, 2020); 2. Inadequate government resources to engage all 260 districts with school re-opening discussions to help catch-up learning, especially those who couldn't participate in the distance learning initiatives; 3. Inadequate capacity at the national and decentralized level to effectively follow-up and track learner progress in distance learning initiatives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(f) Child protection related services</td>
<td>1. Some of the district’s child protection teams in Greater Accra faced issues reaching out to people living in residential communities, making it difficult to ascertain the conditions in such houses. 2. Child protection teams from Accra and Kumasi reported increased cases of adolescent pregnancies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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