UNICEF Georgia COVID-19 Situation Report
18 December 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

- UNICEF and the European Union signed a Joint Initiative for Children’s Rights - please see WEEKLY FOCUS on page 4.
- WASH facilities were rehabilitated in 5 schools in the Abkhazia region, supporting the safe re-opening of the targeted schools by providing proper handwashing points and toilet facilities for over 500 students.
- UNICEF delivered PPE and hygiene materials to schools and kindergartens, Special Penitentiary Services and Small Group Homes in Georgia.
- 15 Tablets were delivered to Tbilisi-based Small Group Homes to improve accessibility to online services/education.
- The National Statistics Office of Georgia, with technical support from UNICEF, started the first wave of the Real Time Monitoring (RTM) survey to examine the impact of COVID-19 on employment, income, education etc.
- UNICEF contracted the telecommunication company “Skytel” to establish internet connections in 1,000 rural ambulatories to enable a centralized communication platform to equip and support rural primary health care doctors in the COVID-19 response as well as to ensure the continuation of essential health services for mothers and their children.
- Three videos were prepared for parents on protecting children in social networks, safe web surfing and cyber hygiene for young users. Overall, with 25 multimedia activities, the “Parenting after the Pandemic” project reached over 1.5 million Facebook users with over 255,000 engagements.
- “Learn more about “COVID-19” TV program that runs on nine regional TV channels, reached 918,000 viewers in the last week of its activities. With the support from USAID, the program aired 456 editions (266 Georgian and 190 programmes in minority languages) totaling 6,840 minutes of coverage on COVID-19 and reached over 2 million viewers throughout Georgia.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

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<tr>
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<th>UNICEF funding gap</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed cases</td>
<td>204,003</td>
<td>2,002</td>
<td>13,549</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>US$ 1,284,412 (29%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confirmed deaths</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child (&lt;18 years) cases</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Abkhazia Confirmed cases</td>
<td>7,504</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confirmed deaths – 100</td>
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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

- UNICEF-led project “Parenting after the Pandemic” prepared three final videos for parents on protecting children in social networks, safe web surfing and cyber hygiene for young users. Overall, with 25 multimedia activities, the project reached over 1.5 million Facebook users with over 255,000 engagements. The project’s summarizing video provides details of achievements. The project will continue with USAID support with a new phase – “Parenting in Isolation”.
- “Learn more about “COVID-19” TV program that runs on nine regional TV channels, reached 918,000 viewers in the last week of its activities. With the support from USAID, the program aired 456 editions (266 Georgian and 190 programmes in minority languages) totaling 6,840 minutes of coverage on COVID-19 and reached over 2 million viewers throughout Georgia.
• With support of USAID, a three-day online training program for “Youth Health Ambassadors” on COVID-19 related information and communication skills started on 17 December. A total of 60 young people around Georgia, including from minority areas, were selected for the training sessions. The Youth Health Ambassadors will assist in disseminating information on hygiene and handwashing, facemasks, and physical distancing as part of the COVID-19 awareness-raising campaign online.

• **A video** was shared detailing the trainings for school students and teachers on the psychosocial impact of COVID-19 and coping mechanisms.

• UNICEF Georgia’s ChatBot initiated 84 conversations with young people that received reliable information about COVID-19, violence against children, and mental health issues.

• UNICEF continues developing **special posters for children**, to help them understand COVID-19 prevention measures; parents are encouraged to **download the printable version of those posters**.

• An animation on “**how to properly use face masks**”, produced in partnership with NCDC, with financial support from USAID, was published on UNICEF’s social media channels and widely shared among different target groups.

• A video on pregnancy during the COVID pandemic was produced based on UNICEF and WHO guidelines. The video will be broadcasted in Abkhazia, Georgia via local television and social media.

• UNICEF risk communication reached 876,329 people through Facebook on COVID-19 issues.

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

• In partnership with the Emergency Situations Coordination and Urgent Assistance Centre, UNICEF contracted the telecommunication company “Skytel” to establish internet connections in 1,000 rural ambulatories during December and January, enabling a centralized communication platform to equip and support rural primary health care doctors in the COVID-19 response as well as to ensure the continuation of essential health services for mothers and their children.

• In partnership with NCDC, UNICEF completed readiness assessments of all maternity houses on infection prevention and control (IPC). All 84 maternity houses received recommendations, as well as on-job trainings on strengthening the IPC measures to better protect mothers and children.

• In partnership with Caritas Czech Republic a project aiming at continuity of maternal and child health services during the COVID pandemic, has launched its capacity strengthening activities simultaneously in Racha-Kvemo Svaneti, Guria and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions of Georgia.

• Rehabilitation of WASH facilities in 5 schools in the Abkhazia region were completed and will support the safe re-opening of the targeted schools by providing proper handwashing points and toilet facilities for over 500 students.

### Adolescents/youth

• On International Volunteer Day, the UNICEF Representative participated in the launch of the new National Volunteering Strategy developed by Youth Agency with UNICEF’s support. A ceremony was held to award the “Volunteer of the Year” for helping people during the pandemic.

• Youth volunteers contributed 3,100 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 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

**UNICEF Representative at International Volunteer Day Award Ceremony with representatives from Youth Agency and Helping Hand**
with disabilities etc. Online posters on volunteering prepared and disseminated through Facebook reached 38,319 people.

- UNICEF’s partner organization Global Initiative in Psychiatry (GIP), continued a series of online webinars for adolescents and their parents, including: “Conflict between parents and its impact on children” reaching 620 views and “How Psychotherapy can help adolescents” reaching 892 views.
- The GIP-T developed and published the guide “Learn more on yourself” which has been provided to schools where the GIP-T psychologists delivered seminars on mental health and psychosocial issues.
- GIP-T continued online consultations of adolescents on their psychosocial needs: conducting 179 consultations for adolescents and 15 one-time consultations for parents.
- “Adjara Organization of Georgia Scout’s Movement” organized 2 online pilot camps on children’s rights with 50 young scouts. The campers received information on the Code on the Rights of the Child, COVID-19 infection prevention and control, camp life and scouting, and tips for effective public speaking.
- UNICEF’s partner, Kant’s Academy, launched a competition “I empower” to generate community project ideas. Three finalists were selected and received 500 GEL to implement the following projects: Raising Awareness of Youth in Ninotsminda Region on Gambling, Trainings on Women’s Rights for Sachkhere Adolescents, and Create a Motivational Animation for Youth to Overcome the Stress during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Child Protection**

- UNICEF is supporting the Public Defender’s Office in commissioning a rapid needs assessment on child labour in the context of COVID-19 in selected regions of Georgia.
- UNICEF partner, RHEA, delivered online art classes and puppet workshops to 10 young people with disabilities in Akhalkalaki.
- PPEs were delivered to Special Penitentiary Services and Small Group Homes in Tbilisi to protect vulnerable children and frontline workers.
- 15 Tablets were delivered to Tbilisi-based Small Group Homes to improve accessibility to online services/education.
- In partnership with the Parliament and the State Care Agency, the UNICEF-supported child hotline “111” continues to assist children and their families, providing support to 1,580 cases to date, of which 1,417 already received assistance and were closed accordingly.
- UNICEF’s partner, Children of Georgia (CoG), provided online psychological support to 502 children and 389 caregivers in small group homes and foster care through group and individual sessions.
- Initiatives for Social Change (ISC) developed guideline on remote communication for the National probation Agency, Guidelines on “Child protection during emergency” were developed for Social workers in education system and teachers.

**Social Protection**

- The National Statistics Office of Georgia, with technical support from UNICEF, started the first wave of the Real Time Monitoring (RTM) survey to examine the impact of COVID-19 on employment, income, education etc.

**Education**

- UNICEF with financial support from USAID, delivered PPE to schools and kindergartens in 6 municipalities of Adjara to facilitate a safe learning environment.
- UNICEF continues to advocate for safe reopening of schools and kindergartens all over Georgia. With field visits to Zugdidi and Batumi, while delivering PPEs to the educational institutions, UNICEF Representative emphasized the importance of the return of children to schools and preschools.
- A 6-week online student-centered instruction (SCI) methodology course is underway for education experts in the Abkhazia region.
**WEEKLY FOCUS: EU-UNICEF Joint Initiative for Children’s Rights**

European Union and UNICEF have launched a Joint Initiative for Children’s Rights in Georgia. The new three-year project supported by the European Union will strengthen capacities of child protection and justice systems to protect the rights of children.

An agreement on the new initiative to improve child protection national system in Georgia was signed by Sigrid Brettel, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Georgia and UNICEF Representative in Georgia, Ghassan Khalil. The project ‘Strengthening Systems and Services for Child Protection in Georgia” will be implemented by UNICEF, in partnership with the Government of Georgia, with financial support from the European Union, over the next three years with a total budget of over Euro 2 million.

UNICEF Representative: ""We are grateful to the European Union for their continued support to strengthening child rights, child protection and justice systems in Georgia."

### Funding

<table>
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<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>
<td>17,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
<td>514,000</td>
<td>260,650</td>
<td>253,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health, Nutrition and WASH</td>
<td>3,001,399</td>
<td>2,146,287</td>
<td>855,112</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Policy</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>241,950</td>
<td>158,050</td>
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<tr>
<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>2,130,987</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,284,412</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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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 22 January 2021

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