Highlights

- Both adults and children are going through a crisis after the traumatic experiences of the earthquakes. It is expected that the consequences on the mental health of children and their families will stay present for many months after this difficult period is over.
- UNICEF delivered 13.5 tons of emergency supplies and approximately 29,000 packages of hygiene products. Four mobile teams are deployed to provide mental health and psychosocial support for children and families. The only association for children with disabilities in the Sisak-Moslavina County is being supported to re-establish early childhood intervention services for children with disabilities.
- On February 13, the move of approximately 150 persons who lost their homes to the settlement with 80 housing containers in Petrinja began. New temporary settlements are expected to be built in the upcoming period.
- The UNICEF Country Office in Croatia and the Slovenia National Committee for UNICEF launched emergency fundraising appeals and raised USD 445,000 so far in Croatia and Slovenia for both the immediate and the longer-term emergency response.

UNICEF’s Response and Funding Status

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Supplies</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Health and Nutrition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCCE</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Situation in Numbers

- 13,750 children directly affected
- 70,000 people directly affected
- 2,000 internally displaced people

$1,361,000 Funds UNICEF needs for immediate assistance in the first 6 months of 2021.

UNICEF Appeal

US$ 1.36 million

Funding status (in US$)

- Funding gap: $716,000
- Funding identified, $645,000
Funding Overview and Partnerships
UNICEF Country Office in Croatia requires US $1,361,000 to provide relief and support in the first 6 months after the earthquake and to address the critical needs of children and adolescents.

Since the disaster, UNICEF Country Office raised USD 273,000 from individuals and corporations. The UNICEF National Committee in Slovenia raised and transferred USD 172,000. Combined with USD 200,000 received from the Global Humanitarian Thematic (GHT) fund, a total of USD 645,000 has been secured for this initial emergency response. UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to all public and private donors for the contributions received.

The total raised to date amounts to 47% of required resources. Additional flexible funding would enable UNICEF to contribute meaningfully to the government-coordinated response in addressing major humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable children and ensuring that the rights of girls and boys are upheld.

Negotiations with corporate partners to support UNICEF’s Emergency Appeal are continuing. Two companies responded positively and provided donations of necessary medical equipment to support ECD/Health programmes. In the first half of February, equipment worth USD 10,252 was delivered to the pediatrician practice of Sisak’s Health Centre (one pulse oximeter and three oxygen regulators) and the General Hospital Sisak (one plasma freezer).

Last week, two additional 12m² office containers were delivered to the health service providers, which will enable the re-establishment of the work of the pediatric practice and the work of the visiting nurses of the Sisak Health Centre. A new donation in-kind of 3,436 cleaning and disinfection products has been delivered to UNICEF’s outsourced warehouse. These will be distributed and used by 22 educational institutions (kindergartens, primary and secondary schools) in Sisak-Moslavina County. Support through free rental/leasing by our corporate partner is in the process of finalisation; three cars will be provided to support the work of mobile teams.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Two strong earthquakes measuring 5.2 and 6.3 on the Richter scale hit the area of Petrinja town in Sisak-Moslavina County on December 28 and 29 2020, causing numerous casualties and widespread material damage. Since the initial strong earthquakes, Sisak-Moslavina County has been hit by numerous aftershocks, increasing fear and anxiety of residents and causing further damage to the houses and buildings (the latest happened on 13 February 2021, measuring 3.7 on the Richter scale). Work is still underway to normalize life in Sisak-Moslavina County. Currently, the priority is to move families, who were left without homes, to the settlements with housing containers. UNICEF urgently delivered protective equipment, hygienic supplies and is providing psychosocial support to children, adolescents, and their families. In the reporting period, UNICEF secured a total of USD 59,000 to support the re-establishment of early childhood intervention services.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Critical needs of children

As of February 1, all elementary school pupils and high school seniors have returned to schools across Croatia. After an initial delay in Sisak-Moslavina Country, classes have begun for these students as well, thus 9,139 students have classes in school, and more than 5,000 attend classes online. 1,921 students and pupils and 211 employees in the school system left the earthquake-affected areas and are accommodated in other parts of Croatia. Approximately 20 teachers announced they would not return to the county, and that replacement staff would have to be found. The Ministry of Education will take over the payment of accommodation costs in student dormitories for all students and pupils from the earthquake-affected areas. It also appealed to all higher education institutions in Croatia to abolish the obligation to pay tuition fees for these students.

Both adults (teachers and parents) and children are going through a crisis, many have survived traumatic experiences. The emotional response from children and adults is very strong and overwhelming. The fear of new earthquakes and buildings collapsing is still present. The consequences on the mental health of children, their parents, and teachers will stay present for many months.
There is little attention to children with disabilities who are, together with their families, also affected by the earthquake. In Sisak-Moslavina County, 2,400 children age 0 – 18 have some disability, out of which there are 608 children enrolled in schools and only 8 in preschools. The County also had an underdeveloped network of social services for children with disabilities before the crisis.

Healthcare facilities have been heavily damaged by the earthquake. Critical needs in the health sector include the procurement of Protective Personal Equipment (PPE), medical equipment, and other supplies. Temporary structures (ship-in containers) have been installed to facilitate the continued delivery of healthcare services. There are seven paediatric primary health teams in Sisak, Petrinja, and Glina, with 8,766 children age 0-18 (out of which 4,772 children age 0-7). Among the youngest group of children, there are about 10% of children with risk of developmental delays should be timely screened by paediatricians and referred to get diagnosed to either health or/and social welfare diagnostic teams, which is not possible in current conditions. There is only one health provider (hospital in Sisak) that has some type of early interventions for children with developmental delays or disabilities as well as only one NGO provider as a part of the social welfare network. Both providers have serious damages to their buildings and equipment and are currently not able to work.

The Ministry of Health has shared a list of critical needs including medical equipment and supplies for the damaged paediatric primary health care units, as well as the central hospital in Sisak. The Country Office contacted corporate partners to support, where possible, the delivery of needed equipment and the continuation of health care for children and women in the affected areas.

Humanitarian strategy and response

The Government declared a disaster in the Sisak-Moslavina Country and parts of Zagreb Country and Karlovac Country. The overall emergency response and coordination are with the local authorities which coordinate civil protection, relief organizations, etc. The Government Coordination Body, led by the Deputy Prime Minister, is in charge of coordinating the national response. The Government also launched a website https://potresinfo.gov.hr as a starting reference point for the affected population and humanitarian actors.

Also, the Government released 19 million USD from the state budget for immediate intervention and assistance to the affected areas. The European Commission also pledged to support the Government and the first relief arrived through the EU mechanism for civil protection. Significant support is provided by the Croatian Red Cross and numerous volunteers. In delivering humanitarian aid to the affected population, authorities mostly rely on the Red Cross and direct all donations either to the Red Cross or civil protection.

Besides, the Ministry responsible for families and social policy deployed an additional social workforce to affected areas and allocated funding to provide one-off cash benefits to the affected population (396 USD for single households and 555 USD for families). More than 10,000 requests have been submitted so far.

UNICEF response

UNICEF’s work in Croatia is guided by the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. On December 31, 2020, UNICEF deployed an emergency team to the affected areas to assess the situation of children and the most urgent needs in affected areas. Based on the initial assessment, the first batch of 13.5 tons of emergency supplies was delivered to the country – 2,400 tarpaulins have been handed over to the Directorate for Civil Protection of the Ministry of the Interior on January 2, 2021. Tarpaulins (plastic sheet covers) are being used for the protection of damaged homes and institutions of service providers from the rain and snow. In cooperation with corporate partners, UNICEF also delivered several hygiene products to 24 public and health institutions - schools, kindergartens, general hospital, and health centres.

Based on the consultations with partners and the findings from the rapid assessment, UNICEF focuses on addressing critical child protection, health, and education needs, and has identified key response sites and children’s core protection needs.

Child Protection

In close partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, social service providers in affected areas, and implementing partners, UNICEF focuses on addressing the urgent, life-sustaining needs of children and their families, with a special focus on the most vulnerable. UNICEF signed a partnership agreement with Society for Psychological Assistance (SPA), and organized induction training for 28 experts who are organized in 4 mobile teams and deployed to affected areas in Petrinja, Glina, Sisak and surrounding villages to provide mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to foster care families and other families at heightened risk, who have been beneficiaries of the social welfare system (e.g., due to parental support services, gender-based violence, poverty, etc.). Mobile teams are closely working with centres for social welfare (Glina, Petrinja and Sisak) and Sisak Family Center Branch in Sisak-Moslavina County to ensure outreach to isolated villages, early identification and timely referral to other protection services and interventions. So far, 52 caregivers, including foster parents (34 F and 18 M) and 84 children (51 F and 34 M) benefitted from MHPSS support. Mobile teams also started to collect key information on the needs of children, through KoBo online tool, to inform further programmatic interventions.
As the earthquakes affected the social workforce too, psychological first aid was provided to 62 (55 F and 7 M) critical child protection professionals in centers for social welfare Sisak, Glina and Petrinja, as well as Children’s Home Vrbina. The outreach teams act as additional support to deployed mobile teams from the line ministry that oversee the administrative workload linked with processing approvals for cash benefits. MHPSS support will be further expanded to other groups of children and adolescents through an integrated and community-based approach.

As the earthquake severely damaged the building of the centre for social welfare in Glina, UNICEF helped ensure the continuation of their work and immediate functionality by donating 10 notebook computers to the centres for social welfare in Glina and Petrinja. Through UNICEF-supported parenting programmes and a phone-helpline for peer support to foster parents, additional psychosocial support is provided to children and professionals working in kindergartens, as well as foster caregivers in affected areas.

**Education**

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF supports the continuation of education for children with disabilities and Roma children and their inclusion into the school system as well as offers solutions for providing psychosocial support to affected students and teachers.

Sisak-Moslavina County has one of Croatia’s largest Roma suburban settlements with many Roma girls and boys living in poverty. The settlements have been heavily affected by the earthquake. UNICEF has partnered with the association Roma Youth to provide mentoring support to Roma primary and secondary school-age children who are at risk of falling behind or dropping out of school due to fear of earthquakes in combination with the COVID-19. The mentors will also work closely with parents and teachers to create environments conducive to learning. Where necessary, learning materials for children will be provided as well. Primary schools with the largest number of children with disabilities have been identified and UNICEF will work on strengthening the capacities of teachers to include children with disabilities into education in the challenging circumstances of COVID-19 and earthquake. UNICEF also plans to provide psychosocial and mental health support to affected teachers and primary and secondary school students.

**ECD/Health**

Based on information gathered from various sources (health and social welfare ministries, county service providers, and local partners), UNICEF has partnered with the Association for Persons with Disability in Sisak-Moslavina County to support the re-establishment of early childhood intervention services for girls and boys with developmental delays and disabilities. Occupational, physiotherapy, and sensory integration therapies have started for the youngest children. In addition, in cooperation with the Teaching and Clinical Center of the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb, their experts will, free of charge, provide a joint assessment (psychologist and speech therapist), for children up to 6 years of age with developmental delays, psychological assessment for school and preschool children and assessment of an educational rehabilitator when needed.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Health and partnership with UNICEF corporate donors, the first batch of the most needed equipment for primary paediatric health services has been ensured. Support for the improvement of services for pregnant and lactating women and their children is ensured with additional counseling of the UNICEF team of health consultants. Since the regular courses for pregnancy and preparation for labour have been disrupted, UNICEF continued to share information on the online courses with doctors and home visiting nurses who are further disseminating it the pregnant and lactating women. Since most of the primary health care centres were heavily damaged, UNICEF in cooperation with the corporate sector ensured two containers to enable the functioning of paediatric health services and home visiting nurses in the town of Sisak.

**WASH**

UNICEF in partnership with Paloma distributed 29,000 hygiene packages in the value of USD 86,300 to support emergency assistance in the area of Glina, Sisak, and Petrinja. Hygiene items were distributed to 24 public institutions such as schools, kindergartens, general hospital and primary health centres.

**Media and communications**

Communication activities in support of resource mobilization, advocacy and programme response priorities include human-interest stories from the field, UNICEF response web page and fundraising appeal web page, press releases and social media posts with regular updates on UNICEF supplies delivery and programme response with CTAs for donations, advice on mental health for young people, youth blogs, leaflets for parents about the reaction to traumatic events and advice for families with children. CO regularly disseminates a Newsletter for private and public sector partners, with updated information regarding UNICEF’s intervention and latest stories from the field.

**Press release – UNICEF’s response - Support for the only association for children with disabilities in Sisak-Moslavina County**
Web publication/leaflets – How to support children after a traumatic event?
Web article - human-interest story - A four year David on therapy in the Association for People with Disabilities in Petrinja
Social media – Support for the Healthcare and Children with disabilities in Sisak-Moslavina County

Next SitRep: 17\textsuperscript{th} March 2021

UNICEF Croatia Flash Appeal: [www.unicef.org/eca/media/15056/file](http://www.unicef.org/eca/media/15056/file)

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Annex 1: Overview of the budget

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