HIGHLIGHTS

- UNICEF organized a two-day joint visit to Pankisi Gorge with a delegation of Ambassadors and representatives of 13 countries – please see MONTHLY FOCUS on page 4.
- UNICEF, with financial support from USAID, supported information sessions in Samtskhe-Javakheti region about COVID-19 vaccination.
- In partnership with the Adjara Organization of Georgia Scouts’ Movement, 300 adolescents in Adjara region, including from remote mountainous villages, received information on safe water, sanitation and hygiene, prevention of COVID-19 pandemic and importance of immunization.
- UNICEF, in cooperation with the Permanent Parliamentary Council on Child Rights, organized a 2-day workshop for 15 parliamentarians on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as major principles and concepts of child rights.
- In Abkhazia, 16 health professionals were trained on immunization-related issues.
- PPE, hand and surface disinfectant and infrared thermometers were provided to healthcare workers in all districts of Abkhazia.
- UNICEF, in cooperation with local partners, provided 370 vulnerable families, including 1,146 children from all districts of Abkhazia, with food parcels, hygiene sets and positive parenting booklets.
- 130 laptops were distributed to head teachers in schools in Abkhazia to support the delivery of online education.
- In partnership with GeoStat and with financial support from USAID, the field work for the second wave of the Real Time Monitoring Survey was completed in April and analysis of the data is underway.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>333,601</th>
<th>4,519</th>
<th>34,448</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed cases</td>
<td>Confirmed deaths</td>
<td>Child (&lt;18 years) cases</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abkhazia</td>
<td>Confirmed cases – 15,006</td>
<td>Boys: 17,749 and Girls: 16,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF funding gap</td>
<td>US$2,472,750</td>
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</table>

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) & EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- UNICEF continues to promote the national COVID-19 vaccination campaign through telling the stories of people (Nodar, Soso, Tamar, Nino) who got their vaccines. People of different ages and professions shared their motivations for getting vaccinated, along with supportive information about the benefits of vaccination. UNICEF staff members also joined these people with their photos.
- Visual stories about vaccination of UNICEF National Ambassador Nikoloz Rachveli were shared via UNICEF social media platforms.
- With financial support from USAID, 60 Youth Health Ambassadors around the country continue creating and sharing communications packages on COVID-19 prevention measures, as well as holding community meetings where they share the knowledge received during trainings provided as part of the project. "Nowadays, misinformation takes up a large part of the information field, so I think that it is very important for young people to be involved in the fight against it. While the country is fighting against the pandemic, I want to be at the epicentre of events and not only to receive fact-based information, but also to disseminate it to my peers." – says Giusha, one of the Youth Ambassadors from Gori. A total of 35 peer seminars and discussion workshops were completed.
HEALTH, NUTRITION & WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE (WASH)

- UNICEF, with financial support from USAID, organized information sessions in Samtske-Javakheti region about COVID-19 vaccination. UNICEF Representative in Georgia, Dr Ghassan Khalil, together with the Director General of the NCDC, Dr Amiran Gamkrelidze, and health experts visited cities of Akhalkalaki and Akhaltsikhe to provide information sessions on COVID-19 vaccination, as well as the immunization process in Georgia. During the visit, discussions were held with Orthodox religious leaders, representatives of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia, local media, and local medical personnel in Akhalkalaki. After the session with the medical personnel of Akhalkalaki, experts went to the local clinic to monitor the vaccination process; and several doctors, who attended the meeting, received their first COVID-19 vaccination. Visual stories about the vaccination of UNICEF Representative were produced in Samtske-Javakheti and shared via UNICEF social media platforms.

- The Adjara Organization of Georgian Scouts’ Movement initiated a new joint programme with UNICEF, with funding from USAID, for an online camp for “Promotion of Hygiene as a Fundamental Right of the Child”. Three terms of the online camp has been accomplished during the reporting period covering around 300 adolescents from various schools of Adjara region, including remote mountainous villages. During the online camp, the young scouts received information on safe water, sanitation and hygiene, prevention of COVID-19 pandemic and importance of immunization along with information on the Code on the Rights of the Child, using interactive age appropriate instruments and games.

- Trainings on the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) were conducted over 4 separate sessions for 81 healthcare workers from the Gagra, Gali, Sukhumi, Gulripshi and Ochamchira districts in Abkhazia.

- Trainings on immunization-related issues were conducted by an international consultant for 16 participants from the healthcare sector in Abkhazia

- PPE, hand and surface disinfectant and infrared thermometers were provided to healthcare workers in all districts of Abkhazia.

CHILD PROTECTION

- UNICEF, in cooperation with the Permanent Parliamentary Council on Child Rights organized a 2-day workshop for 15 parliamentarians on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as major principles and concepts of child rights.

- UNICEF held discussions with newly appointed staff of the child protection units in Kutaisi, Poti and Batumi municipalities about their needs and to jointly plan activities for strengthening child and family programmes and services at the local level.

- On 15 April, UNICEF, in cooperation with the Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of the Parliament and Democracy Development Agency, launched a project to support the implementation of the Code on the Rights of the Child by enhancing coordination between the legislative and executive branches of the Government and supporting local municipalities and central agencies to fulfil new functions deriving from the Code on the Rights of the Child.

- UNICEF supported the State Care Agency to formulate case management procedures, including relevant instruments and guidelines for frontline social workers, supervision guidelines and a 24-hour response mechanism.

- On 17-18 April, UNICEF organized a high-level stakeholder workshop to further agree on the next steps to expand and institutionalize the biopsychosocial model of disability assessment and status determination system, including quality assurance mechanisms and an electronic data management system.
UNICEF, with the financial support of the Government of Estonia, is assisting the State Care Agency to establish integrated service centres for child victims and/or witnesses of violence in Tbilisi and Kutaisi, providing investigative and short/long-term rehabilitation services. The Tbilisi site is under renovation, the premise for Kutaisi has been identified, and the government agencies involved in the service provision (The Ministry of Internal Affairs, The Prosecutor’s Office, The Legal Aid Service) have prepared standard operating procedures.

**SOCIAL PROTECTION**

The results of the first wave of Real Time Monitoring Survey field work can be accessed on the UNICEF and GeoStat websites. Major findings in the first wave are available in a brief report.

The field work for the second wave of the Real Time Monitoring Survey was completed in April and analysis of the findings is underway. Preparations for the third wave have started, with the field work planned for second part of May.

UNICEF, in cooperation with local partners provided 370 vulnerable families, including 1,146 children from all districts of Abkhazia, with food parcels, hygiene sets, medical kits and positive parenting booklets.

With the support from UNICEF, the Mayor of Kutaisi and the Child Rights Protection and Support Unit of the Kutaisi Municipality delivered packages of essential hygiene, food products, toys for development, books and educational resources to 25 vulnerable families in Kutaisi.

A Situation Assessment report on Children’s Rights and Welfare in Batumi was presented to the Municipality. The report was prepared with support from UNICEF to help the Municipality develop an action plan as part of Batumi’s pledge to become a Child-Friendly City.

**EDUCATION**

With the most preschools and schools reopened in Georgia, UNICEF is making efforts to address COVID-19 learning loss through support in developing remedial teaching and learning strategies.

UNICEF and Education for All Coalition continued the partnership supporting the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and the Teacher Professional Development Centre with the back to preschools and schools strategy. Necessary technical support and resources will be provided in the course of this partnership to produce visual material on early childhood education, a series of short interactive videos with and for children, self-learning animated videos and innovation webinars on effective teaching and learning practices. The partnership will contribute to the decentralization of teacher training system and digitalization of school textbooks with reference to the best international practices and standards in partnership with the International CK-12 Foundation.

In the field of early and preschool education, UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and Adjara in the design and implementation of a series of capacity development activities for preschool educators and managers for improved services for young children.

To address the digital divide in education, 130 laptops were distributed to head teachers in schools in Abkhazia to support the delivery of online education.

Another episode of Audunei, a television show in which children present various science and education topics in a child-friendly manner, was produced and televised in Abkhazia.
MONTHLY FOCUS: Joint Visit of UNICEF and International Development Partners to Pankisi Gorge

On 21 April, UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Ms. Afshan Khan; UN Resident Coordinator, Dr Sabine Machl; and UNICEF Representative in Georgia, Dr Ghassan Khalil, paid a two-day joint visit to Pankisi Gorge with a delegation of Ambassadors and high-level representatives of Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Spain, Turkey and the United States of America.

The goal of the visit was to provide international development partners with an account of the current needs of children and their families in Pankisi Gorge including issues and challenges such as quality of education, lack of internet access, scarcity of social services and a lack of youth opportunities. UNICEF, alongside its partners, aims to support children and young people of Pankisi to overcome these challenges and reach their full potential.

“Along with our partners, we are looking forward to make sure that these barriers for children are removed and young people of Pankisi reach their full potential” – UNICEF Representative Dr Ghassan Khalil

The COVID-19 pandemic is a core issue impacting the lives of young people in Pankisi. “A secure, fair, and inclusive future in Pankisi region will depend on boosting the competence, confidence and resilience of young people and their families. Without sustained action, we risk an irreversible decline in progress on child rights and the Sustainable Development Goals” – said the UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Ms. Afshan Khan.

The agenda of the visit included meetings with the Council of Elders, the Women’s Council, local parents, teachers and religious leaders. During the joint visit, meetings were held with the local youth where members of the delegation discussed the challenges of young people in Pankisi, as well as a child-oriented development plan for Pankisi. During the visit UNICEF, in partnership with the parents’ network “Parents for Education”, conducted a workshop for 15 parents on positive parenting. UNICEF Representative, Dr Ghassan Khalil and Deputy Head of Mission of Norwegian Embassy, Marko Soldic met the representatives of schools from Pankisi Gorge and handed over the educational resources for children; similar packages will be delivered to 25 schools in Georgia. For the representatives of Pankisi schools an introductory seminar was held about a joint educational project aiming to establish a child-centred education system through peer training of teachers. The project is implemented by Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (MoESCS), UNICEF and Government of Estonia,

At least one in four children in Pankisi lives in poverty with low levels of household income. The COVID-19 pandemic had a large negative impact on education, since schools have been closed for the majority of the year. The poorest of local
children have no access to online learning, while informal education opportunities are insufficient for Pankisi youth, including scarcity of physical infrastructure for cultural activities and sport facilities.

Media Literacy workshop for young people organized by UNICEF and MDF to develop the skills to assess the information, critically handle and check the reliability of sources.

FUNDING 2021

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<th>Funding Needs</th>
<th>Funds Identified</th>
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<td>Health, Nutrition and WASH</td>
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<td>Risk Communication and Community Engagement</td>
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<td>Grand Total</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 16 June 2021.

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