

31 March 2020

© UNICEF/Iran/2020/Sayyari

Middle East & North Africa Region COVID-19

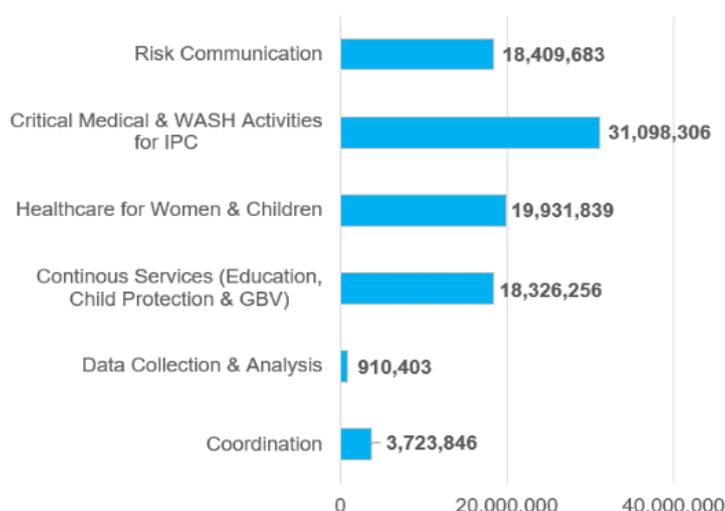
Situation Report No. 1

unicef 
for every child

Highlights

- A significant spread of the COVID-19 outbreak was recorded throughout the MENA region in the second half of March and is expected to continue over the coming weeks, requiring an increase in support to government-led responses. With the greatest concentration of pre-existing humanitarian needs for children in the world, countries in MENA facing conflicts, sanctions and/or political transition are at higher risk, including for vulnerable or displaced populations often living in overcrowded settings.
- Throughout the region, UNICEF is working with line Ministries as well as WHO to establish, coordinate or reinforce national mechanisms for Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE). Messages aimed at reaching key audiences, influencers and at-risk groups are being translated and broadcasted to counter misinformation. In Jordan, in the last two weeks of March, 1.8 million users have been reached through social media, between 3.5 to 5 million users reached through WhatsApp and 1.5 million viewers are being reached daily through TV channel.
- UNICEF is assisting Governments with the provision of critical medical and WASH supplies and activities related to the improvement of Infection and Prevention Control (IPC). In Iran, 16 metric tons of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) were provided to health workers in March, and more supplies are in the pipeline. In Lebanon, UNICEF developed IPC training materials, conducted Training of Trainers (TOTs), and trained (with WHO) over 1,000 front-line workers in 192 Public Health Centres.
- UNICEF is supporting Governments and partners in 7 countries in the production and dissemination of educational E-learning modules and broadcast materials for Radio, TV and online platforms, as well as guidance for parents on home-schooling and extra-curricular activities

Funding Requirements (US\$)



Situation in Numbers



19 out of 20 countries in the MENA region reported laboratory-confirmed cases



41,515 COVID-19 cases
35,408 (85%) in Iran



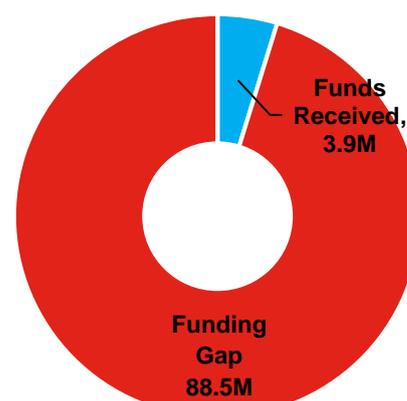
2,679 COVID-19 deaths
2,517 (94%) in Iran



All **110 million** school aged students are not in school due to closure of education facilities.

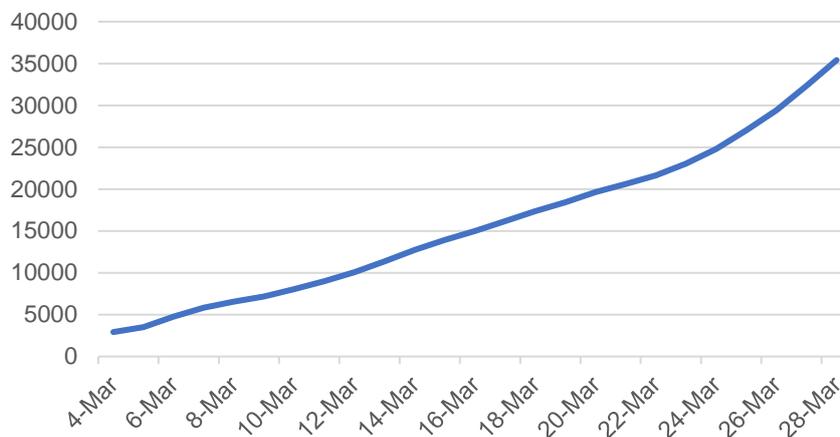
UNICEF Appeal 2020
US\$92,400,333

Funding Status (US\$)



As of March 30th, 2020

Cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in the Islamic Republic of Iran



Source : WHO Daily update for The republic Islamic of Iran

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

UNICEF's response in the Middle East and North Africa region has been developed in alignment with the 2020 WHO Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP), as well as the UNICEF [Covid-19 Global Humanitarian Action for Children \(HAC\) appeal](#).

The key strategic priorities in the response plans are on the immediate measures that must be undertaken to ensure preparedness and response actions to prevent and respond to the COVID-19 outbreak in each country focusing on the following areas: 1) Strengthening risk communication and community engagement (RCCE), 2) Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) activities and supplies related to improving infection and prevention control (IPC), 3) Supporting continued access to essential health care services for women, children and vulnerable communities, including case management, 4) Supporting access to continuous education, social protection, child protection and GBV services disrupted by the pandemic, 5) Data collection and analysis of impact on children and women.

In each country where it has a presence, UNICEF has intensified its support to the response as follows:

Algeria:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- UNICEF in collaboration with WHO is working with the Ministry of Health to support implementation of the communication strategy of the national preparation & response plan to COVID-19. UNICEF is supporting the Government in the development and dissemination of messages and materials through social media, television, announcements by local religious leaders and key influencers.
- UNICEF is partnering with WHO and UNHCR to strengthen RCCE in the refugee camps.
- A partnership was developed with the Algerian Muslim Scouts to reach Adolescents and Youth.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF is engaging with the Government to: 1) strengthen the capacities of the Child Protection hotline on responding to emerging child protection cases in the context of COVID-19; 2) Develop a Communication campaign to promote positive parenting practices in the context of COVID-19.

Djibouti:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- UNICEF is taking part in a national coordination mechanism led by the government and WHO, and UN partners. UNICEF has been supporting governmental efforts through social media messaging; misinformation tracking and management; undertaking a qualitative assessment and supporting feedback mechanisms through social service centers; printing and dissemination of materials in public spaces; as well as mobilization of key social media influencers, local and religious leaders' councils and associations, online mothers' groups, as well as community management committees. UNICEF is developing qualitative and quantitative surveys to inform tailoring of RCCE interventions in the country.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Decentralization, the City Council and the local communities' authorities to put in place handwashing stations with soap and sanitizers around the most vulnerable areas of the cities.
- UNICEF is supporting development of the IPC section of the national response strategy.

Continuity of health care services for women and children

- UNICEF is engaging with the MNCH/ National Nutrition Program to support the dissemination and implementation of appropriate breastfeeding recommendations in the COVID-19 context, including provision of replacement feeding for infants unable to be breastfed.
- UNICEF has placed an order for 50 oxygen concentrators (10 already confirmed through the global procurement and 40 still pending availability in the international markets) to support national capacity for case management.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Education (MoE) to finalise the e-learning national programme and develop response to continuity of education for the most vulnerable and population with no access to digital resources or media.
- Jointly with IOM, UNICEF will provide needed assistance to migrants' children under-18 (about 54) sheltered together with 250 migrants in a temporary camp near Djibouti city. Immediate assistance will be provided while also working to speed up the repatriation of those willing to return to their home country (majority to Ethiopia).

Egypt:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- A national RCCE coordination mechanism has been established by the Ministry of Health. The national RCCE strategy includes focus on vulnerable populations. UNICEF is supporting data collection efforts through Rapid-Pro deployment, a joint multimedia campaign focused on raising awareness on verified preventive measures, misinformation management and secondary impact of COVID-19; and development and dissemination of SBCC materials in Arabic to community schools and other locations.

Continuity of health care services for women and children

- UNICEF procured and started distributing PPE (including coveralls, gloves, masks and gowns) to cover the needs of approximately 500 health workers for a month.. The provision of the equipment is accompanied through online training (video on the proper use of PPE was jointly developed with WHO and shared with the MoHP) and face to face training, which will be conducted by the MoHP with technical and financial support from UNICEF.
- The private sector has been engaged for procurement of essential equipment. The first in-kind donation of WASH supply is expected next week.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF is in the process of developing school guidelines to prevent and control COVID-19 during Grade 12 examination and once schools reopen.
- Textbooks for community school children in remote areas without access to e-learning opportunities are being procured.
- Distribution of hygiene kits for 684 childcare institutions and orphanages (22,000 children) under the Ministry of Social Solidarity are being procured; UNICEF has initiated an assessment of care homes for medium and long-term support.
- Children on the move are being supported through remote psychosocial support and through awareness generation, as part of the ongoing programmes.

Gulf Area (Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia):

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- UNICEF continues to share selected guidance, media assets and other key materials globally and regionally available in line with UNICEF's mandate and areas of focus. While Governments are producing their own content, they continue to request global and regional tools that can inform this content. This includes information on effective ways of raising awareness of hand-washing and hygiene among children, communicating with children about the COVID-19, and engaging with young people through digital platforms such as "Tik Tok".
- UNICEF is also working with WHO and partners to address misinformation.

Supporting support to the education, child protection, and national child-focused actors

- **Child Protection:** UNICEF has been sharing emerging guidance and key considerations to NGOs, ministries of social development and others to pro-actively address anticipated rise in child protection concerns and to amplify existing services such as helplines and offering topical online trainings and other measures.

- UNICEF maintains advocacy with partners to ensure the most vulnerable continue to have ways to access child protection services such as through helplines.
- **Education:** UNICEF will continue to extend support to ministries of education, in collaboration with other UN agencies such as UNESCO, to share information and promising practice in education response. This includes sharing key messages and tools on virtual learning for adoption to local contexts – including guidance for schools, parents, and learners.
- UNICEF continues to share supplemental learning activities and platforms that are readily available, in complement to the national distance programmes that have been rolled out.
- With respect to **national child-focused entities**, UNICEF is providing tools and guidance around helping families to communicate and adapt to the impact of the coronavirus on the family unit (communication, mental health, promoting on-going activity in the context).

Iran:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- To support national efforts, and based on a rapid qualitative assessment, UNICEF has developed a RCCE plan at the UNCT level and in coordinating with WHO. Technical RCCE guidance translated into Farsi, is being shared with partners.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- UNICEF is assisting the government in the most affected provinces by procuring vital and lifesaving equipment and PPE for medical and social workers. Working in coordination with WHO, UNICEF provided 16 metric tons of PPEs and other health supplies for health workers in Iran and more supplies are in the pipeline.
- UNICEF is supporting the government with IPC services through the revision and reinforcement of the national hygiene and sanitation protocols for public places and provision of required supplies and equipment.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- ICO translated the 'Key messages and actions for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) prevention and control in schools' and shared with the Ministry of Education (MOE) for nation-wide dissemination.
- UNICEF Iran initiated a national Mental Health Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS) Task Force (multi sectoral) on joint Risk Communication plan including PSS for students, parents & teachers. The Safe School Guidelines have been translated into Farsi.

Iraq:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- UNICEF Iraq disseminated social media and print messages and materials in Arabic, Kurdish and English, achieving over 1,500,000 views on social media alone. Three million users also received SMS in local languages through partnership with private telecom operators.
- Collaboration with WHO and partners is being strengthened for coordinated approaches including around misinformation management. A joint televised public service announcement by the WHO and UNICEF representatives was released in this regard. Messages are being distributed through social media and radio.
- Community mobilization around preventive measures is underway in IDPs and refugee camps with appropriate precautions, while local leaders, adolescent groups and private sector partners are also being mobilized to expand outreach.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- UNICEF is planning to provide 1,800 healthcare workers with infection control equipment such as goggles, 3 layered masks and gloves, to support the health care system. UNICEF WASH, together with the cluster, is ensuring continuity of WASH services in the IDP camps, despite some challenges of access due to the lockdowns. Promotion of handwashing in camps and public places is taking place.

Continuity of health care services for women and children

- UNICEF is supporting MoH to develop guidance on safe burial procedures, safe pregnancy and breastfeeding. While planning for the resumption of services, particularly immunization catch up once lockdowns are over.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- Safe school operation guidelines were shared with MoE, for future reopening of schools. UNICEF is working with the MoE on the on-line learning platform which has been launched, as well as developing the strategy document on catch-up education for when the crisis abates. Child Protection is working with cluster partners on guidance for addressing child protection challenges in detention centres, reformatories, prisons, etc., as well as dealing with cases of child separation when parents are being taken for COVID-19 testing.

Data collection and analysis of secondary impacts on children and women

- Analysis show that the curfew has impacted the access of families to vaccination services; this will result in lower coverage, critically impacting the measles campaign. UNICEF Social Policy team is working with Ministry of Planning on the impact of the crisis on poor and vulnerable families and possible social protection measures that could be taken.

Jordan:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- A national multi-sectoral RCCE coordination mechanism has been established by the Ministry of Health with UNICEF's support, and includes the National Council for Family Affairs, Jordan Teachers Association, the Royal Health Awareness Society and others.
- UNICEF is leading the development of a national RCCE strategy that includes focus on vulnerable populations. Social media and phone-based messaging and misinformation tracking are ongoing. Materials have been developed in Arabic, with daily messages shared throughout the Country. In the last two weeks of March, 1.8 million users have been reached through social media, between 3.5 to 5 million users reached through WhatsApp and 1.5 million viewers are being reached daily through TV channels.
- UNICEF is also supporting community feedback activities through Facebook polls, U-report and a recent rapid assessment through Rapid Pro. Mobilization of social media influencers, religious and community leaders has been initiated and training workshops have been conducted for Government and civil society partners, volunteers and university students.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- UNICEF procured and distributed WASH and hygiene supplies to Syrian refugees living in camps and vulnerable communities. Water demand in some locations soared by more than 40% in some areas and UNICEF provided additional water. A first round of distribution (including soap, cleaning and hygiene kits and jerrycans) has been undertaken, reaching 608 individuals in King Abdullah Park, 36,055 refugees in Azraq Camp, and 14,700 people in Informal Tented Settlements (ITS) and vulnerable communities. Key hygiene messages were disseminated.
- The capacity of 70 key partner and governmental focal points was strengthened through remote training of Trainers (TOT) on Infection and Prevention Control (IPC).
- In collaboration with MOH, MOWI, WHO and partners, UNICEF is continuously assessing the Country's needs for PPE and medical supplies and providing direct funding and procurement support for medical supplies and PPEs through the supply division in Copenhagen, sourcing through local providers.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, UNICEF continues the emergency trucking of safe water to areas in the north and central governorates where supply interruptions were reported.

Continuity of critical care services for women and children

- UNICEF is supporting the continuation of primary and secondary health care as well as nutrition services in refugee camps and ensuring the provision of essential water and sanitation services across all refugee camps.
- UNICEF provided 2,000 hygiene kits that covers around 5,000 beneficiaries (including children and elderly) through Ministry of Development care centres.

Supporting access to Education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Education on continuous learning for children, following the closure of all schools on 15 March. Financial support has been provided to the creation of online learning platforms and filming of televised lessons, and 200 laptops have been provided for teachers to support distance learning.
- UNICEF reached an agreement with MoE to provide printed learning materials as "learning packs" for the most vulnerable G1-6 students including in refugee camps and informal tented settlements.
- The UNICEF helpline for families remains open, with young people employed as call center agents who moved to a work-from-home modality. All agents have been trained and are utilizing updated scripts to help support parents during the coronavirus response.
- Staff and volunteers from UNICEF-supported Makani centers and partners continue to support children's learning and well-being from home through the dissemination of multimedia recordings, including videos and audio messages for those who are visually impaired or unable to read or write, with exercises, activities and games.
- UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Social Development and other key government stakeholders with technical assistance to enhance the preparedness and response of the national social protection systems. Joint efforts are being undertaken with the World Bank in strengthening the National social safety net systems to make it more shock-responsive.
- In addition to the continuation of the monthly cash transfer 'Hajati' that supports 10,000 children to stay in education, UNICEF Jordan has extended the cash transfer to an additional 18,990 vulnerable children during this period to support families.

Data collection and analysis of secondary impacts on children and women

- UNICEF conducted a rapid survey using RapidPro among the beneficiaries of the Hajati cash programme focusing on the sources of information on COVID-19 and hygiene and physical distance behaviours adopted by the respondents. The results of the survey are informing the UNICEF C4D work to contribute to the COVID-19 containment.

Lebanon:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- A national inter-agency RCCE coordination mechanism including government ministries, INGOS, UN agencies, inter-religious groups and academic institutions is supported by UNICEF.
- UNICEF developed localized communication materials; over 3.1 million people reached through seven Public Service Announcement videos broadcast on all local Lebanese television channels. Over 2 million people have been reached through 192 multi-media posts on UNICEF's social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and website), including 25,000 people during the UN-led Hand-Washing Campaign on World Water Day.
- A rapid phone-based behavioural assessment and the development of a national RCCE strategy are underway to focus approaches and target interventions. Social media messaging and misinformation tracking are ongoing.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- At the request of the Government, UNICEF together with UNHCR, UNDP, UNRWA and NGOs are planning to assist 200,000 Syrian and Palestine refugees as well as vulnerable communities in the COVID-19 response, including through the establishment of isolation units within informal settlements, provision of Infection and Prevention Control (IPC) kits, safety protocols, and guidance.
- UNICEF is co-leading the IPC Pillar, leading development of guidelines and strategies, coordination of the needs and provision of IPC material, disinfection of public institutions if cases are confirmed.
- UNICEF developed IPC training material, conducted TOT in collaboration with Balamand University and the Lebanese Red Cross, and trained over 1,000 front-line workers of UN, NGO and government institutions, unions and syndicates in 48 sessions.

Continuity of health care services for women and children

- Border land vaccination points continued to function, even as the incoming flow of travellers has drastically reduced. UNHCR registration centers have been temporarily closed. Routine immunization services are unfortunately also reduced due to confinement measures. Meanwhile, UNICEF secured sufficient stocks of measles and polio vaccines in country, even though decision to adjourn the measles campaign has not yet been taken.
- The network of 192 PHCs have been strengthened with IPC training of non-health and health workers and PPE to provide quality of care in a safe environment; 35 nurses, paramedics at 5 border points were trained on IPC and 32 nurses from nurseries were trained.
- UNICEF has started a blanket distribution of soap and IEC material, with Hygiene promotion session, for 200,000 Syrian refugees living in Informal Settlements. So far, more than 80,000 were reached.
- In coordination with other actors, such as ACF, UNICEF is distributing food parcels (for PLW) with information on IYCF.
- UNICEF trained around 40 nurseries on IYCF, with a focus on Child Feeding.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF is supporting a Learning Readiness Rapid Assessment to determine ability of families with children enrolled in suspended formal and non-formal education (NFE) activities to access and manage distance learning opportunities (e-learning/TV/paper-based).
- Development of an intervention framework by the Education Sector Core group focusing on three interlinked components: 1) Health Awareness on COVID-19 for students and their parents. 2) Wellbeing/PSS for students and parents to support them in coping with COVID-19 restrictions; 3) Alternative learning materials and approaches to cater for those unable to properly access the full curricula.

Social Policy and Social Financing

- Advocacy has started to scale-up the social protection response (complementing the health response), including expansion of social assistance through cash transfers to the poor and vulnerable (with World Bank), and suspension of payments/fees for primary health consultations for all children, pregnant women, elderly, and those with disabilities.

Libya:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- A national RCCE plan is being developed and includes a special focus on vulnerable groups such as detainees, migrants and refugees.
- A national hotline has been established and multiple channels are being used for messaging that includes social media, radio, television, outdoor and print materials. Materials are currently in Arabic and are being translated into French, Somali, Hausa, Amahric, and Tigrinya to reach all migrant groups. These messages and are being widely disseminated to health facilities, host communities, restaurants, and other public spaces.

Continuity of health care services for women and children

- UNICEF has shared updated guidance with government on BF and IYCF and ensuring provision of life saving nutrition supplies for the treatment of SAM.
- UNICEF has shared guiding principles for immunization activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Morocco:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- UNICEF supported the UNCT in developing a RCCE plan to complement national response efforts and to develop a joint UN Crisis Communication Strategy. UNICEF is also actively engaged in social media messaging and has partnered with the High Commission for Planning to conduct a national ICT-based survey on the social impact of COVID-19.

Continuity of health care services for women and children

- UNICEF is supporting the development of a strategy to strengthen PHC capacity and to ensure continuity of service delivery for Reproductive Maternal and Child Health services, including the activation of a community health mechanism, currently in modulization phase.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF is supporting the MoE and education partners in the production of pre-primary and primary education lessons for Radio, TV and distance learning platforms, with a focus on Preschool and Parental education.
- UNICEF has partnered with Mohammed V University to provide remote psychological support to children in protection centers and social workers via WhatsApp. This new service aims at supporting vulnerable children in contact with the law and children living without parental care to overcome fear anxiety.
- UNICEF is providing direct assistance to children and families on the move in Tangier- Tetouan and Oriental regions in coordination with CSOs. UNICEF and implementing partners continue operating two shelters for 40 vulnerable unaccompanied and separated children. Almost 300 children and families on the move living in Tetouan and Oriental regions have been reached by social workers, and further assessment of needs is ongoing to expand the reach and mobilize funds.

Social Policy and Social Financing

- MCO successfully advocated for the rollout of a temporary cash transfer for RAMED (subsidized health insurance which has database) beneficiaries who are in the informal sector and/or facing loss of income due to economic impact of COVID-19. Phase 1 is expected to cover around 2.57 million households (6.75 million beneficiaries).

Oman:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- A newly formed inter-ministerial RCCE committee led by the Ministry of Information, along with Ministries of Health and Education has been established to coordinate awareness raising. UNICEF is supporting efforts of this committee and other existing structures by amplifying messages through social media, radio, TV and involving social media influences and the private sector to increase appeal and reach of messages; addressing the spread of misinformation; and sharing guidance and content on preventive measures aimed specifically at children and youth which are being disseminated through schools and social media.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF and WHO are supporting the Ministry of Education in the development and dissemination of guidelines to schools on preventive measures against COVID-19.
- UNICEF is raising awareness among communities on the importance of home-schooling via its social media channels, radio and TV, disseminating guidance for parents on engagement of children at home in curricula and extra-curricular activities. It also includes raising awareness on the importance of psychosocial stimulation.

- UNICEF undertook a gap-analysis to identify areas where remote access to learning may be hindered, such as for children with disabilities, and in discussion with Ministry of Education on scaling up existing initiatives by linking these up to the private sector, the Ministry of Information, as well as other partners.

Social Policy and Social Financing

- UNICEF has undertaken an analysis of the socioeconomic impact resulting from sharp reduction of global oil prices, as well as on preventive measures being implemented by the government of Oman to combat the spread of COVID-19. UNICEF is working on a short assessment of the social protection system's ability to address the possible impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable children and their families. This work will inform UNICEF advocacy and programmes.

State of Palestine:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- UNICEF and WHO are leading the RCCE Task Force comprising Ministry of Health (MoH) and private sector partners.
- Key prevention and risk reduction practices are being promoted through a mix of channels including TV, radio, social media, press, billboards, printed materials, religious leaders' sermons, outdoor and social media influencers.
- A technical-hub group has been formed to work on establishing feedback mechanism. It includes main private sector partner Bank of Palestine which is making its networks and resources available to the campaign. More private sectors entities are engaged including restaurants, taxi companies, telecommunication companies and home delivery companies.
- A misinformation monitoring mechanism has been activated and youth-based NGOs are being mobilized to encourage preventive behaviours.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- First shipment of PPEs will be delivered end of the week to MoH. This includes 60,000 protective gowns and 13,000 surgical masks.
- In coordination with MoH and WHO, UNICEF ordered 26 ICUs stations for health facilities in Gaza and West Bank. Additionally, the offshore procurement for provision of 30 oxygen concentrators for the MOH has been completed and equipment is in pipeline.
- UNICEF is supporting the MoH by providing IPC materials for Waste Management in designated testing, quarantine centers and ICUs for the COVID-19 response in the West Bank.
- UNICEF will provide family Hygiene Kits through e-Vouchers to around 5,000 families in the West Bank and 18,000 families in Gaza.

Continuity of health care services for women and children

- In close coordination with key health cluster partners, local NGOs and health authorities, UNICEF is supporting continuity of health care services particularly for women and children through procurement of medical supplies and delivery of health and nutrition services using innovative approaches and social media to reach the most vulnerable families with children.
- UNICEF is supporting 15 implementing partners in Palestine (9 in Gaza and 6 in West Bank) through procurement of essential hygiene supplies to support the control and prevention of infections transmission in healthcare settings and communities. Close to 18,000 US\$ worth of IPC is to be shipped to key implementing partners (NGOs and CSOs dealing with children with disabilities) to ensure that IPC measures are fully implemented during the delivery of maternal and child health and nutrition, and early childhood development and intervention services.
- UNICEF is supporting the introduction of hotlines for promotion and protection of appropriate nutrition among pregnant, lactating women and infants and young children.
- UNICEF is sharing updated guidance on protection and promotion of BF and IYCF in the COVID-19 emergency situation with government and implementing partners and ensuring provision of life saving nutrition supplies for the treatment of women and children with anemia.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF is procuring hygiene kits for 200 schools (120 schools in Gaza). A monitoring mechanism on children's access to the Ministry of Education (MoE) e-learning platform has been established.
- In coordination with partners, UNICEF is supporting the MoE to contextualize the global guidelines for safe school operations. The MoE has developed and launched an Emergency Plan with support from the UNICEF-led Education Cluster, and resources from Education Cannot Wait are being reprogrammed to cover urgent needs.

Sudan:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- At the national level, the RCCE coordination mechanism is convened by the Federal Ministry of Health, UNICEF and WHO and also includes the private sector, media and CSOs.
- UNICEF has supported the government in the establishment of an online information center, including the provision of 10 computers and is amplifying prevention messages through traditional mass, social and on-ground media including using megaphones and mosque-based announcements. Three awareness workshops have been conducted for youth groups, religious leaders and private sector.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- UNICEF delivered 500 PPEs and goggles to the Federal Ministry of Health to support national capacity for infection prevention and control.

Continuity of health care services for women and children

- UNICEF identified the immediate WASH support needs based on UNICEF assessments conducted for the two Khartoum based isolation centers.
- UNICEF has provided technical assistance for development of SOPs and guidelines for continuity of non-COVID-19 essential health and nutrition services in a safe health environment.
- Specific guidelines on CMAM & IYCF has been adapted from global guidelines for use in Sudan
- UNICEF revised standard practice with regards to RUTF distribution to minimize any possible exposure from large crowd gathering.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF has shared the school guidance note with the MoE and is supporting MoE in administering examinations with safe school operation procedures such as disinfecting and improving WASH facilities at the examination sites.

Syria:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- A national coordination committee for RCCE has been set up with the support of UNICEF coordination which includes Ministries, UN agencies, community organizations, NGOs, and youth networks.
- A national multi-agency response plan is in place that includes RCCE as a key component with clear emphasis on North East Syria, risk analysis, audience segmentation, gender, disability and stigma. A package of risk reduction messages and materials have been developed in Arabic, Kurdish and English across mass, social and print media and are being widely disseminated in public spaces.
- In North West (NW) Syria, IEC Materials are being shared with social mobilizers and health staff working at PHCs, for COVID-19 prevention and awareness messaging.
- A social media campaign has started through NGOs, youth networks, Community initiatives, community influencers, and UNICEF staff pages in Qamishli, broadcasting awareness messages every evening.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- Inclusion of a COVID-19 prevention related flyer in hygiene kits sent to NW Syria.
- In collaboration with WFP, UNICEF in Damascus and Gaziantep are procuring soap to be included with WFP food parcels for distribution, along with UNICEF Information Education Communication pamphlets. This distribution will reach 4.9 million people throughout Syria.
- The WASH section conducted a quick assessment for the existing WASH facilities in Dwier quarantine center to rehabilitate the existing facilities in addition to provide and install new prefab toilets.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- Consultation with GoS on measures to address education and examinations support.
- Financially supported disinfection of schools.
- As part of Aleppo child protection response to COVID-19, 40 games kits were distributed to 10 residential care centers hosting around 700 children to ensure the safety and mental wellbeing of these children.

Tunisia:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- A national RCCE coordination mechanism led by the Ministry of Health with the support of WHO and UNICEF, is embedded within the overall response coordination structure. Feedback and misinformation are tracked

through social media. Print, outdoor, audio-visual and digital materials have been developed in local dialects and Arabic and disseminated throughout the country.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- UNICEF has established an IPC working group for coordinating IPC work in addition to a hygiene promotion coordination platform.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF is procuring hygiene supplies for schools, health centers and childcare centers and supporting WASH in schools.
- UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Women to strengthen the helpline (free call) for psychosocial counseling for children and parents in distress from confinement.

Social Policy and Social Financing

- UNICEF is advocating and supporting the Government in articulating child related social protection measures, building on some broader social protection temporary measures already announced by the government (covering categories such as those in the informal sector, elderly and disabled).

Yemen:

Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)

- UNICEF and WHO have supported the establishment of a national RCCE coordination mechanism led by the Health Education Centre, and the drafting of a RCCE strategy. A rapid qualitative assessment is being conducted to inform efforts. Mass and social media messaging as well as misinformation management have been initiated. Print materials have been disseminated through the emergency cash transfer (ECT) mechanism, Whatsapp trees, clusters and community engagement working group, as well as religious leaders and mass media. Religious and tribal leaders, teachers, performing artists, and social media activists are being mobilized to amplify messaging through online channels; and three training workshops have been conducted at central and governorate levels.
- An estimated number of 8 million people were reached through Radio and TV. About 6.6 million people were reached through Social media (WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter). An estimated 10,000 people shared their concerns on COVID-19 through Facebook and WhatsApp and received answers to their questions from C4D community volunteers.

Provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies and improving infection and prevention control (IPC)

- UNICEF, WHO and the Ministry of Health jointly completed forecasting for PPE. UNICEF Yemen is coordinating with the UNICEF Supply Division in Copenhagen for procurement, and prepositioning available PPE in country at governorate level.
- UNICEF has developed modules and training materials jointly with WHO for use in updating health workers on IPC, and on other general and basic technical aspects of COVID-19.
- UNICEF has started providing support to entry points, quarantine facilities with water and emergency sanitation facilities as well as hygiene materials. These include installation of water tanks, installation of emergency latrines, emergency water trucking and distribution of hygiene kits for approximately 4,000 people in 6 locations. Assessment and preparedness activities are ongoing in other identified locations by authorities.

Continuity of health care services for women and children

- UNICEF is adapting modules and guidelines jointly with WHO to update health workers on the protocol for management of COVID-19 cases including among children, pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- UNICEF is supporting ongoing programming for routine services in 2,500 Primary Health Care facilities, 18 hospitals and in communities.
- The Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) Thematic Working Group (TWG) led by UNICEF is adapting guidelines for treatment of SAM and MAM and developing guidance for adapted CHV activities in context of COVID-19.
- Training for staff working in the nutrition units will be carried out to orientate staff on new protocols to ensure the safe continuation of essential nutrition services including growth monitoring, management of malnutrition, optimal IYCF services and counselling for COVID-19 patients, including at-risk pregnant women, infants and new-borns – with optimal IPC measures in place .
- Technical support (supervision, on the job training; adopting proper hygienic measures; distribution of PPE) is being provided to primary, secondary and tertiary health facilities to manage outpatient and inpatient nutritional care for severe and acute malnutrition.
- UNICEF is liaising with WHO on the nutritional situation of women and children - including Yemeni returnees and migrants who are in returnee quarantine centers - to ensure appropriate nutrition services are made available.

- UNICEF is providing technical support to the nutrition units to ensure smooth referral services to the secondary and tertiary health facilities to manage outpatient and inpatient nutritional care with severe and acute malnutrition.

Supporting access to education, Child Protection and GBV services

- UNICEF is advocating for alternative solutions to the use of schools as isolation centers for people forced to return from Saudi Arabia and guarantee access to safe learning for children when schools will reopen. UNICEF is advocating for the release of all juvenile offenders and implementation of non-custodial measures and restorative justice including reintegration with the ministry of justice. Negotiations are ongoing with MOSAL to reunify all children living in orphanages and identifying alternative care methods such as fostering for unaccompanied children.

Social Policy and Social Financing

- The Emergency Cash Transfer and Cash plus initiative procedures have been revised to strengthen scheduling, awareness raising (through distributing materials on COVID-19 awareness at payment sites and in families through case managers) and increasing working hours/days to reduce overcrowding. The same materials and awareness messaging have been also distributed to the communities living in slums (Muhamasheen) through the SWF case managers as part of the Integrated Model of Social and Economic Assistance and Empowerment (IMSEA) project.

Coordination

UNICEF regional office and country offices continue to engage and work in close collaboration and coordination with WHO, governments, Inter Agency taskforces/other UN agencies, Centre for Disease Control, INGOs and other stakeholders including donor agencies, World Bank and others to avoid overlaps and optimise complementarities in the response.

Advocacy and Partnerships

UNICEF's advocacy in MENA is driven by the key concern that the longer the pandemic lasts, the higher the numbers of children who will be vulnerable and miss out on the one-time opportunities that is "being children" and living their childhood. The impact COVID-19 is having on children is not secondary. While fortunately, the number of children reported infected is low, millions of children around the world are impacted first-hand in one way or another. This is evident in the number of children who are staying home and are not going to school anymore, the psychological impact of the lockdown, the shock to getting used to staying indoors, and social isolation. There is also the likelihood increase of exposure to violence, especially domestic violence.

We are particularly concerned for children living in countries impacted by years of long-term humanitarian crises, armed conflicts, and/or decades of neglect, poverty and poor governance, who are now even more prone and exposed to exploitation, abuse and violence. In Syria and neighbouring countries and in Yemen, UNICEF continues to run some of its largest humanitarian operations in the world. Our teams are working around the clock to deliver lifesaving assistance and continue responding to emerging needs.

In Egypt, UNICEF and the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) are partnering with the private sector to support the Ministry of Health and Population's response efforts. Pledges received include in kind contributions of disinfectants for public transportations and schools; and bars of hand-soap for 240 hospitals, 5,000 family health units and for children attending community schools. The private sector also delivered to UNICEF in Egypt 190,000 books covering 5 subjects per grade for vulnerable at-risk children in community-schools with no/limited access to digital resources and online connectivity; and printing of 100,000 copies of the WASH awareness coloring books for the same target population. Logistics companies are also delivering free of charge for UNICEF donated supplies to hospitals in 8 governorates in Egypt. Discussions are also initiated with the International Monetary Fund to protect the fiscal space necessary to support the continuation of the provision of essential services for children at a time when public finances are under stress.

External Media

STATEMENTS

COVID-19 Does Not Discriminate; Nor Should Our Response: <https://www.unicef.org/mena/press-releases/covid-19-does-not-discriminate-nor-should-our-response>

Interruption to key water station in the northeast of Syria puts 460,000 people at risk as efforts ramp up to prevent the spread of Coronavirus disease: <https://www.unicef.org/mena/press-releases/interruption-key-water-station-northeast-syria-puts-460000-people-risk-coronavirus>

الأمم المتحدة تطلق خطة عالمية للاستجابة الإنسانية لجائحة كوفيد-19:

<https://www.unicef.org/mena/ar/19-البيانات-الصحفية-الأمم-المتحدة-تطلق-خطة-عالمية-للاستجابة-الإنسانية-لجائحة-كوفيد-19>

توقف ضخ المياه من محطة المياه الرئيسية في شمال شرق سوريا يعرض 460,000 شخص للخطر في خضم تصاعد الجهود لمنع انتشار مرض فيروس كورونا:

<https://www.unicef.org/mena/ar/توقف-ضخ-المياه-محطة-الرئيسية-شمال-شرق-سوريا-يعرض-460000-شخص-للخطر-كورونا/البيانات-الصحفية>

كوفيد-19 لا يميز بين شخص وآخر، تمامًا كما يجدر بعملية تصدينا للوباء أن تكون:

<https://www.unicef.org/mena/ar/كوفيد-19-لا-يميز-بين-شخص-وآخر-تمامًا-كما-يجدر-بعملية-تصدينا-للوباء-أن-تكون/البيانات-الصحفية>

PRESS RELEASES

Despite challenges, UNICEF continues to ship vital supplies to affected countries amid soaring number of COVID-19 cases: <https://www.unicef.org/mena/press-releases/despite-challenges-unicef-continues-ship-vital-supplies-affected-countries-amid>

تقدم اليونيسف المزيد من الدعم إلى 145 دولة من أجل استمرار تعليم الأطفال بعد أن اضطرت غالبية المدارس حول العالم إلى إغلاق أبوابها بسبب فيروس كورونا

<https://www.unicef.org/mena/ar/تقدم-اليونيسف-المزيد-الدعم-145-دولة-استمرار-تعليم-الأطفال-20%-إغلاق-المدارس-فيروس-كورونا-كوفيد-19>

المدارس-فيروس-كورونا-كوفيد-19

UNICEF scales up support in 145 countries to keep children learning, as COVID-19 forces majority of schools worldwide to close: <https://www.unicef.org/mena/press-releases/unicef-scales-support-145-countries-keep-children-learning-covid-19-schools-close>

Global Partnership for Education announces USD8.8 million in funding to UNICEF for COVID-19 response: <https://www.unicef.org/mena/bouncer/global-partnership-education-announces-usd88-million-funding-unicef-covid-19-response>

كوفيد-19: الأطفال يواجهون خطراً عالياً بالتعرض للإساءات، والإهمال، والاستغلال، والعنف، وسط تشديد الإجراءات الرامية لاحتواء المرض – اليونيسف:

<https://www.unicef.org/mena/ar/كوفيد-19-الأطفال-يواجهون-خطراً-عالياً-بالتعرض-للإساءات-والإهمال-والاستغلال-والعنف-وسط-تشديد-الإجراءات-الرامية-لاحتواء-المرض-اليونيسف>

COVID-19: Children at heightened risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence amidst intensifying containment measures – UNICEF: <https://www.unicef.org/mena/press-releases/covid-19-children-heightened-risk-abuse-neglect-exploitation-and-violence-amidst>

كوفيد-19: الأطفال يواجهون خطراً عالياً بالتعرض للإساءات، والإهمال، والاستغلال، والعنف، وسط تشديد الإجراءات الرامية لاحتواء المرض – اليونيسف:

<https://www.unicef.org/mena/press-releases/covid-19-children-heightened-risk-abuse-neglect-exploitation-and-violence-amidst>

Resource mobilisation

UNICEF Middle East and North Africa appeals for US\$ 92.4 Million to support government efforts and interventions to prevent the spread of the virus and respond to those that have been affected through provision of critical supplies and adequate health care and responding to the social economic impacts of the disease.

Funding is urgently required to support government, communities and children to stop the spread of the virus. To meet the immediate response needs, UNICEF country offices have reallocated some flexible funds from regular resources to kick start the prevention activities and procure urgent emergency supplies.

Next SitRep: 15 April 2020

Who to contact for further information:

Ted Chaiban
Regional Director
Middle East and North Africa
Regional Office
Tel: +962 6 5502 401
Email: tchaiban@unicef.org

Yannick Brand
Regional Emergency Advisor
Middle East and North Africa
Regional Office
Tel: +962 6 5502 400
Email: ybrand@unicef.org

Juliette Touma
Regional Chief of Communications
Middle East and North Africa
Regional Office
Tel: +962 6 5509 624
Email: jtouma@unicef.org

Funding Status*

Country	Requirements	Funds available	Funding gap	
			\$	%
Algeria	\$1,405,000	\$0	\$1,405,000	100%
Djibouti	\$1,550,000	\$344,443	\$1,205,557	88%
Egypt	\$12,666,108	\$0	\$12,666,108	100%
Iran	\$6,400,000	\$2,089,541	\$4,310,459	77%
Iraq	\$9,750,000	\$324,000	\$9,426,000	93%
Jordan	\$6,632,741	\$0	\$6,632,741	100%
Lebanon	\$13,940,170	\$1,126,443	\$12,813,727	92%
Libya	\$4,161,000	\$0	\$4,161,000	100%
Morocco	\$986,500	\$0	\$986,500	100%
Oman	\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000	100%
State of Palestine	\$2,303,480	\$0	\$2,153,480	100%
Sudan	\$7,063,000	\$0	\$7,063,000	100%
Syria	\$9,183,334	\$0	\$9,183,334	100%
Tunisia	\$2,250,000	\$0	\$2,250,000	100%
Yemen	\$12,734,000	\$0	\$12,734,000	100%
MENARO	\$1,175,000	\$0	\$1,175,000	100%
Total	\$92,400,333	\$3,884,427	\$88,515,906	96%

* As defined in Humanitarian Appeal of 25/03/2020 for a period of 9 month. Funds Available are as of 30/03/2020