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Reporting Period: 1-15 June 2020

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for every child

Central African Republic

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Situation Report n°5

HIGHLIGHTS

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Central African Republic (CAR) more than doubled in the reporting period, reaching 2,410 including 14 deaths, compared to 1,064 and 4 deaths two weeks earlier. On 12 June, President Touadera announced the easing of some restrictions, including the reopening of places of worship, restaurants and bars. To mitigate this move, he imposed the compulsory wearing of masks in public places. The President also mentioned that the partial reopening of schools is under planning.

In this reporting period results achieved by UNICEF and partners include:

- Water supplied to an additional **5,000** people in neighbourhoods experiencing acute shortages in Bangui and Bouar;
- **441** handwashing stations set up in Bangui, Bouar and Sibut for an estimated **88,200** users per day;
- **4,339** patients, including **2,839** children under 5 received free essential care;
- **3,952** mothers and caregivers sensitized on infant and young child feeding practices;
- **15** children survivors of gender-based violence identified and assisted;
- **2,322** children and **1,505** community members received basic psychological support in the context of COVID-19.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

As of 15 June, the number of COVID-19 confirmed cases in the Central African Republic (CAR) has crossed the 2,000 threshold with 1,346 new cases confirmed in the last two weeks, bringing the total number of cases to 2,410 and the number of confirmed deaths by COVID-19 to 14.

Most cases are still registered in the Bangui urban area. Local transmission cases now represent more than three quarters of the total confirmed cases, the rest being imported. As of 15 June, 20,006 people had been tested since the beginning of the epidemic but the overall availability of COVID-19 tests remains low.

In his address to the Nation on 12 June, President Touadera said that although the virus continues to spread, the escalation in cases is the result of CAR's successful policy of increasing the number

Situation in Numbers



2,410 COVID-19 confirmed cases*

14 COVID-19 deaths*

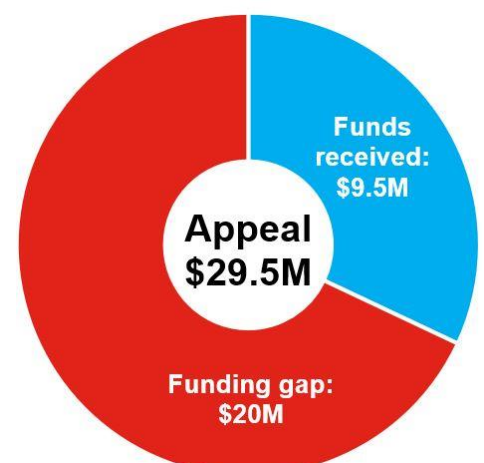
**WHO/MoHP, 15 June 2020*



1.37 million

estimate number of children affected by school closures

**UNICEF CAR's
COVID-19 Appeal
US\$ 29.5 million**



of tests and contact tracing. While recognizing that the enforcement of preventive measures remained a challenge, the President announced the entry into “phase two” of the COVID-19 response, which includes the obligation to wear masks in public places, the production and distribution by the Government of 10 million free fabric masks, and the reopening of places of worship and restaurants. Work on a plan for the partial reopening of schools is still ongoing. The distribution of free masks would prioritize health workers, places of worship, market sellers, vulnerable people and schools when they reopen.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

UNICEF, alongside WHO and other actors, has been supporting the CAR government since the outset of the crisis. Since early March, UNICEF technical staff, have participated in the different technical commissions working on the implementation of the national response plan. UNICEF management continues to be actively involved in the design of the overall strategy, participating in high-level mechanisms chaired by the President (Crisis Committee), the Prime Minister (Technical Committee), and the Health Minister (Strategy and Method Committee).

UNICEF CAR’s COVID-19 response plan focuses on risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) and infection prevention and control (IPC), in particular water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) aspects, but also on ensuring continuous access to healthcare, nutrition services, education, child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) services, while aiming to mitigate COVID-19’s socio-economic impact on the most vulnerable households through cash transfers. It is fully aligned with both the CAR Government’s plan and UNICEF’s global COVID-19 response plan.

UNICEF continues to lead the WASH, Nutrition, Education Clusters and the Child Protection Sub-Cluster thus ensuring that the needs of children and their mothers are fully considered in the broader CAR humanitarian community’s COVID-19 strategy and response.

UNICEF’s emergency and humanitarian response to the ongoing CAR crisis fully continues despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding Overview & Partnerships

Despite generous support received from donors, UNICEF still faces a 68% funding gap on its COVID-19 response plan. Funding shortfalls are over 70 % in WASH and over 90% in Education while an estimate 1.37 million children are affected by school closures. In addition to the already difficult living conditions resulting from the protracted crisis in CAR, children are experiencing reduced access to essential services and protection. They are also exposed to increasing risks of violence and abuse.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE ACTIONS

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

UNICEF in partnership with Ground Truth Solutions (GTS) surveyed a sample of 36 key informants in cities and towns affected by COVID-19 (Bangui, Bambari, Bouar, Baboua, Beloko, Bossemptele, Bossembele) to find out about difficulties in implementing COVID-19 preventive measures at community level. When asked to rank the first three sources of information on COVID-19, community groups were ranked first, social media second and religious groups third. The United Nations and NGOs ranked only fourth but were among the top three when it comes to identify reliable sources. When asked which preventive measures are the most difficult to apply, responders most frequently listed not shaking hands, the prohibition of larger gatherings and the wearing of masks, as these measures are in contradiction with faith or culture and because of the lack of masks in the country. This data will be used by UNICEF to refine its RCCE strategy.

In Bossangoa area, where the measles campaign in response to the current epidemic is ongoing, UNICEF trained the mayors of six municipalities and 75 community mobilizers on COVID-19 preventive measures.

Eight new radio spots, 12 interactive programs and three radio sketches on COVID-19 were produced by UNICEF partner Radio Ndeke Luka and broadcast through a network of 10 community radios across the country.

Infection Prevention & Control (IPC)

To ensure the continuity of water distribution in the capital Bangui, especially in the areas where water shortages have been the most acute, UNICEF drilled and equipped one new borehole serving 2,000 people in Rue Mete neighborhood

and two in Vara and Gongono 7 neighborhoods, serving 500 people each. In Rue Mete high borehole yield allowed for the installation of a motorized pump feeding a bladder and a distribution ramp, while in Vara and Gongono 7 the boreholes have been fitted with handpumps. All sites are equipped with hand washing stations.

In Bouar area, UNICEF and a local partner have protected four springs providing safe drinking water to 2,000 people.

To promote handwashing as a prevention measure, UNICEF and the Agence Nationale de l'Eau de et l'Assainissement (ANEA) installed 400 additional handwashing stations in public places and at water points in Bangui and its suburbs. In Sibut, the main city in Kemo prefecture, UNICEF installed 18 handwashing stations at water points in town and in three health centers. In Bouar area, UNICEF has provided 20 handwashing facilities to the main health centers and governmental offices. In total, these 441 handwashing stations serve an estimated 88,200 users per day. Every handwashing station is provided with 2 packs of 40 soaps, enough to cover the needs for 3 months.

In Bambari, UNICEF donated 30 packs of 40 soaps to the Health District to be distributed to health centers.

In partnership with ANEA, UNICEF carried out COVID-19 sensitization in villages along the road from Kaga Bandoro to Ouandago reaching 4,986 people, including an estimated 1,900 children and 1,780 women in this remote, conflict-affected area of Northern CAR.

Continued access to essential Healthcare

Since the start of COVID-19 pandemic in CAR in March, UNICEF and partners sensitized more than 42,164 mothers and caregivers on infant and young child feeding practices, including 3,952 during this reporting period.

During the first two weeks of June, UNICEF and partners provided free essential care and prenatal consultations to 4,339 people including 2,839 children under five and 1,490 pregnant women across the country. The most frequent diseases treated among children under five are malaria (42%), acute respiratory infections (30%) and diarrhea (28%). Out of the 1,490 pregnant women who received at least one prenatal consultation, 90% accepted to be tested for HIV, 3% tested positive and were put on antiretroviral treatment.

Access to continuous education, child protection and GBV services

UNICEF has been working with the Ministry of Education and its decentralized entities to prepare a plan for the partial reopening of schools, giving priority to grades whose students have to sit for examinations at the end of this school year. The plan was presented to the Prime Minister on 5 June, and was mentioned by the President during his 12 June address, adding that work on this issue was ongoing. In the meantime, UNICEF keeps on supporting learning through radio education programs and 8 new programs were broadcast in Bouar area.

During the reporting period, a total of 2,322 children (1,197 girls) and 1,505 community members (794 women) were reached door-to-door with UNICEF-supported psychosocial activities and awareness raising activities on COVID-19 child protection concerns. Activities were mainly carried out in Bangui, Ouham, Ouaka, Ombella-Mpoko and Nana Gribizi in partnership with the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Family and Child protection and NGO partners.

Furthermore, 15 cases of gender-based violence (GBV) were identified and supported. Among them, 10 cases of girl survivors of sexual violence and 5 cases of child marriage of girls aged between 10 and 16 years old.

UNICEF continued to provide support to children without parental care in Bangui and other prefectures. As part of these efforts, 12 children in conflict with the law released from custody during the previous reporting periods received NFI kits 16 other separated and unaccompanied children were identified, documented and placed in foster families while family tracing is ongoing.

UNICEF trained 35 NGO staffs (13 women) on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) in the context of COVID-19. Among them, 10 people have been appointed as focal points for their organizations and will be supported to conduct small scale awareness raising campaigns on PSEA and GBV prevention among community members and children.

UNICEF CAR: www.unicef.org/infobycountry/CAR.html

UNICEF CAR Facebook: www.facebook.com/UNICEFCAR

UNICEF CAR Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UNICEFCAR>

UNICEF CAR Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal: <http://www.unicef.org/appeals/car.htm>

Annex A: Summary of Response Result Results

	UNICEF and IPs		
	2020 Target (March – Dec20)	Total Results	Change since last report ▲ ▼
RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (RCCE)			
Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services	2,000,000	2,000,000	0
Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms.	9,000	5,847	36
INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (IPC)			
Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services	655,000	211,500	93.200
Number of healthcare facilities reached with (one or more) WASH services and IPC equipment	100	2	0
Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	1,654	0	0
Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)	1,654	0	0
CONTINUITY OF HEALTHCARE*			
Number of children & women receiving essential healthcare services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV & GBV* care in UNICEF supported facilities	71,000	43,470	4,339
Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms	138,000	42,164	3,952
ACCESS TO CONTINUOUS EDUCATION, CHILD PROTECTION & GBV SERVICES			
Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning	850,000	49,307	0
Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements	300	29	16
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support	2,500	8,121	2,337
Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation & referrals for survivors, including for PSEA	120	181	35
SOCIAL PROTECTION			
Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian multi-sector cash grant for basic needs	5,000	0	0

* These activities are funded under the pre-existing CAR Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC), and not included in UNICEF CAR's COVID-19

Annex B: Funding Status

Sector	Requirements	Funds received/ reallocated/ Confirmed	Funding gap	
			\$	%
Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)	600,000	560,000	40,000	7%
Infection Prevention & Control (IPC)	16,500,000	4,792,000	11,708,000	71%
Health & Nutrition	3,100,000	1,537,000	1,563,000	50%
Child Protection	1,500,000	970,000	530,000	35%
Education	5,300,000	500,000	4,800,000	91%
Humanitarian Cash Transfer	2,500,000	450,000	2,050,000	82%
Multisector	-	643,000	-	-
Total	29,500,000	9,452,000	20,691,000	68%