



Reporting Period: 16-31 May 2020

unicef 

for every child

Central African Republic

Coronavirus (COVID-19)
Situation Report n°4

HIGHLIGHTS

The COVID-19 epidemic continued spreading quickly in the Central African Republic (CAR). The number of confirmed cases jumped from 301 on 15 May to 1,064 on 31 May and the country recorded its first 4 confirmed COVID-19 deaths.

While the vast majority of cases are still in the capital city area, the virus is increasingly spreading in the Western half of the country, primarily along the main trade route from Cameroon to Bangui.

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

- **96,807** people sensitized on COVID-19 at the same time as on the ongoing vaccination campaign in response to the measles epidemic in Bossangoa health district, which recorded its first COVID-19 cases on 27 May.
- Water supplied to an additional **10,000** people in neighborhoods experiencing acute shortages in Bangui;
- **144** handwashing stations set up in Bangui, Kaga Bandoro and Gamboula for **30,300** users per day;
- **2,059** patients, including **1,528** children under 5 received free essential care;
- **38,212** mothers and caregivers sensitized on infant and young child feeding practices;
- Radio lessons broadcast for **49,307** children;
- **780** people sensitized on COVID-19 child protection risks

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The COVID-19 epidemic continued spreading quickly in the Central African Republic (CAR) during the reporting period. The number of confirmed cases jumped from 301 on 15 May to 1,064 on 31 May and the country recorded its first 4 confirmed COVID-19 deaths. 34 per cent of the cases are imported, mostly from Cameroon.

The vast majority of cases are still registered in the Bangui urban area, but the virus is increasingly spreading in the Western half of the country, especially along the main road from Cameroon (Bossemele, Bossemptele Yaloke, Bouar,

Situation in Numbers

1,064 COVID-19 confirmed cases*



4 COVID-19 deaths*

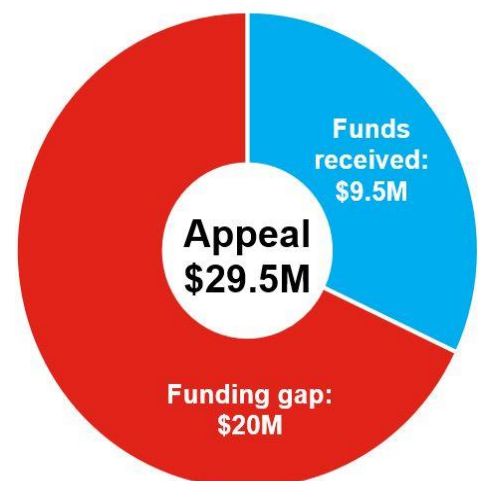
*WHO/MoHP, 31 May 2020



1.37 million

estimate number of children affected by school closures

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



Beloko) but also to other major Western towns such as Paooua, Bossangoa, Bozoum, Berberati and Carnot. In the Eastern half of the country, a few cases have thus far been reported in Bambari and Ippy, both in Ouaka prefecture. As of 31 May, 15,593 people had been tested in the country since the beginning of the epidemic. On 24 May, the CAR Finance Minister publicly announced that he had tested positive for COVID-19.

On 26 May, the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) issued instructions on the compulsory wearing of masks in public transports, shops, offices and for some professions including medical personnel, taxi drivers and humanitarian workers.

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.

In this time of pandemic, 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 taken into account 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

UNICEF CAR's appeal increased from US\$19 million to US\$29.5 million to support its response plan for children impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This increase reflects the consequences of the spread of the disease nationwide, and families' growing needs, including access to safe water. Lifesaving handwashing, key to prevent the spread of #COVID19, is compromised by the lack of access to clean water.

Despite generous support received from donors, UNICEF faces a major funding gap (68 per cent) to support the COVID-19 response plan. Funding shortfalls are over 70 per cent in WASH and over 90 per cent 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 surveyed 5,194 U-Reporters to find out their knowledge, attitudes and behaviors related to COVID-19. 93% of respondents said they have heard about COVID-19; 57% stated they have been informed via radio about the virus and 88% said handwashing reduces the spread of COVID-19. However, still 11% of respondents admitted that they do not know how the virus is transmitted and 21% think their communities are unaware of the danger of the epidemic. UNICEF will use the survey results to refine its RCCE strategy.

UNICEF also trained 23 social workers from the Ministry of Social Affairs in interpersonal communication to provide COVID-19-specific psychosocial support to children. Ten media specialists were also trained by UNICEF partner Radio Ndeke Luka in reporting in times of COVID-19.

UNICEF has been integrating COVID-19 messages into the vaccination campaign in response to the ongoing measles epidemic, which was declared nationwide on 24 January. In Bossangoa health district, 191 community mobilizers visited

35,412 households and sensitized 96,807 people on COVID-19 as well as on the measles campaign, just as Bossangoa recorded its first confirmed COVID-19 cases on 27 May.

Infection Prevention & Control (IPC)

As the pandemic spreads, scaling up the availability of water in underserved, high risk areas and of handwashing facilities in public spaces remain major WASH challenges. During the reporting period, UNICEF set up five additional water distribution systems serving 10,000 people in peripheric areas of Bangui. In four neighborhoods (Gbabili, 92 Logements, Gobongo Route and Gobongo Colline), water is supplied via motorized pumps installed on new boreholes, wich should contribute to improving the situation on the longer term. In the PK5 neighborhood of Bangui, UNICEF collaborates with the Direction Générale de la Protection Civile (DGPC) to supply water through their firetrucks. All sites are equipped with hand washing stations.

UNICEF and the Agence Nationale de l'Eau de et l'Assainissement (ANEA) installed 5 additional handwashing stations in critical points in Bangui. The stations are opened twelve hours a day and water is regularly replenished. Users have been sensitized on the correct use of the devices by community outreach animators previously trained by UNICEF. On the eve of the Eid Al Fitr UNICEF, in collaboration with the Direction Generale des Ressources Hydrauliques (DGRH), installed 25 handwashing stations next to the mosques in PK5 area in Bangui to ensure handwashing during the festivity. Elsewhere in the country, in Kaga Bandoro (North) UNICEF installed 44 handwashing stations at water points around town. UNICEF also provided 70 handwashing stations to be installed in public places and health centers in Gamboula (Southwest), a major crossing on the Cameroon border. In total, these 144 handwashing stations serve an estimated 30,300 users per day.

At the Beloko border crossing with Cameroon, UNICEF distributed WASH kits to 70 people currently quarantined in the UNHCR Transit Center for returning refugees, which is temporarily reconverted as a COVID-19 testing and isolation unit there. Sensitization on COVID-19 prevention measures is also carried out in the center.

Continued access to essential Healthcare

Since the start of COVID-19 pandemic in CAR in March, more than 38,212 mothers and caregivers have been sensitized on infant and young child feeding practices. UNICEF is also leading a special Nutrition Working Group under the Nutrition Cluster to support cluster members in implementing the national COVID-19 guidelines. The group also developed specific guidelines for nutritional response in the context of COVID-19.

During the second half of May 2020, UNICEF provided free essential care and prenatal consultations to 2,059 people including 1,528 children under five and 531 pregnant women in the localities of Kaga-Bandoro, Dekoa and Bambari. The most frequent diseases treated among children under five are malaria (35%), diarrhea (22%) and acute respiratory infections (10%). Out of the 531 pregnant women, 59% accepted to be tested for HIV, 2% tested positive and were put on antiretroviral treatment.

Access to continuous education, child protection and GBV services

UNICEF supports continuing learning through radio education programmes. An estimated 49,307 children followed the lessons broadcast by UNICEF partner Radio Ndeke Luka and a network of 10 community radios. UNICEF partners and Education Districts authorities ensured effective participation in distance learning through door-to-door visits.

As part of the support provided to the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Family and Child protection, UNICEF trained 54 social workers from the 8 districts of the city of Bangui and 36 community leaders to build their capacity to ensure psychosocial support to affected families and child protection case management during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Within the framework of activities aimed at ensuring assistance and protection of unaccompanied and separated children, family tracing was carried out for 13 children released from Ngaragba Central Prison in Bangui. Twelve who had already been reunified with their families continued to benefit from individual follow-up from the Ministry's social workers.

Meanwhile, UNICEF and partners sensitized 780 community leaders, parents and children in Bangui and on the main trade route to Cameroon on the prevention and control of COVID-19, the prevention of gender-based violence and preventive psychosocial support for the community in the event of a positive case.

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>

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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	5,811	5,194
INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (IPC)			
Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services	655,000	118,300	40,300
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	39,131	2,059
Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms	138,000	38,212	3,575
ACCESS TO CONTINUOUS EDUCATION, CHILD PROTECTION & GBV SERVICES			
Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning	850,000	49,307	5,102
Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements	300	13	1
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support	2,500	5,784	780
Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation & referrals for survivors, including for PSEA	120	146	0
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%