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Reporting Period: 1-15 May 2020

## HIGHLIGHTS

The pace of the COVID-19 epidemic in the Central African Republic (CAR) continued to quicken in the first half of May, with the number of confirmed cases increasing from 64 to 301, with still no casualties reported.

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

- An estimated **2 million people** (40% of the country's population) continued to be reached daily with COVID-19 radio spots broadcast on the main radio stations;
- Water supplied to an additional **6,000** people in Bangui and **17** handwashing stations installed in critical points for **8,500** users per day;
- **265** handwashing stations set up in Kaga Bandoro, Bossangoa and Berberati for **53,000** users per day;
- **4,959** patients, including **2,472** children under 5 received free essential care;
- At least **44,205** children following lessons on the radio;
- **12** children released from Ngaragba Central Prison thanks to COVID-19 related measures reunited with their families;
- **4,044 people** sensitized on COVID-19 child protection risks and receiving basic psychological support.

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The pace of the COVID-19 epidemic in the Central African Republic (CAR) continued to quicken in the first half of May, with the number of confirmed cases increasing from 64 to 301, with still no casualties reported.

The surge in new cases comes as the health authorities have been stepping up testing. However, a significant proportion of tested individuals could not be contacted for their results, and the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) called on 13 May for anybody in this situation to report themselves.

Two weeks into restrictions on road traffic between CAR and Cameroon imposed by the CAR government, the proportion of imported cases in the total number of CAR cases has decreased from 75% to 60%.

According to market surveillance data by REACH, 72% of market traders surveyed nationwide reported at the end of April having had fewer customers in the previous two weeks. The main reasons mentioned were movement restrictions,

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# Central African Republic

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Situation Report n°3

## Situation in Numbers



**301** COVID-19 confirmed cases\*

**0** COVID-19 deaths\*

\*WHO/MoHP, 15 May 2020

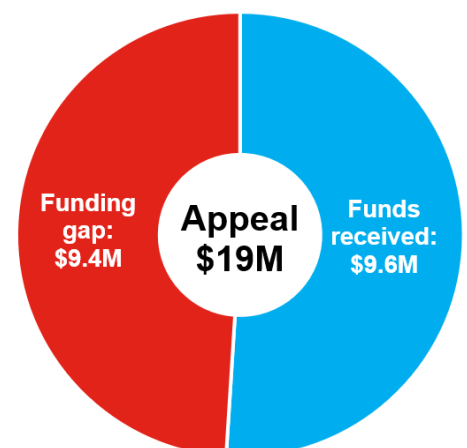


**1.37 million** estimate number of children affected by school closures



**US\$ 19.1 million** funding required

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



fear of COVID-19, and lack of financial means. However, COVID-19 does not yet seem to have a significant impact on the average price of the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) on the main markets countrywide.

### 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 preparation of the national plan. UNICEF management has also been 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. 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 COVID-19 response plan stands at 19 million USD to date, the appeal is 51 per cent funded, either through new contributions or reallocated funds (see Annex B for the sectoral requirements).

During the reporting period, funding received from the governments of Canada, Japan and, the United States of America will enable UNICEF to expand COVID-19 response in the WASH, RCCE, Child Protection, Humanitarian Cash Transfers and Education sectors. The sharp increase in confirmed cases in the past weeks could indicate an acceleration of the epidemic. UNICEF still needs additional resources to sustain a response commensurate to the scope of the needs.

## SUMMARY ANALYSIS PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE ACTIONS

### Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

UNICEF initiated a survey assessing knowledge, attitudes and behaviours regarding COVID-19 targeting 30,168 U-Report subscribers through the country's three main mobile phone networks. The survey will contribute to the collection of social and anthropological data related to the COVID-19 epidemic and will be used by UNICEF to refine its RCCE strategy. The survey was announced countrywide on radio stations partnering with UNICEF and through the mobilization of the National Youth Council (CNJ).

UNICEF also trained 52 social workers from the Ministry of Social Affairs in interpersonal communication to provide COVID-19-specific psychosocial support to children within the framework of UNICEF-funded projects.

Meanwhile, the airing of COVID-19 sensitization and prevention spots has continued through partnerships with UNICEF on Radio Ndeka Luka and a network of 10 community radios across the country, reaching an estimated two million people (40% of the country's population).

### Infection Prevention & Control (IPC)

To ensure the continuity of water distribution in the capital Bangui, UNICEF set up three additional distribution systems serving 6,000 people in peripheric areas of Bangui where water shortages have been the most acute. In the Balapa 1 and Cité Jean XXIII neighborhoods, water is supplied via motorized pumps installed on new boreholes. In Damala neighborhood UNICEF collaborates with the newly reactivated Direction Générale de la Protection Civile (DGPC) to supply water through their firetrucks, with the help of the newly reconstituted firefighter corps and civil protection volunteers. On all these systems, bladders and distribution ramps are used to provide 6 to 12 taps per location. Sites are laid out to limit gatherings and promote social distancing and are all equipped with handwashing stations.

WASH assistance is also effective at the COVID-19 isolation and screening unit at PK26 an important waystation on the main road to Cameroon, thanks to the partnership with the Direction Générale des Ressources Hydrauliques (DGRH). UNICEF and DGRH constructed four gender-segregated latrines and installed two tanks and tap stands. Water is supplied via water trucking by the Civil Protection.

Furthermore, UNICEF and the Agence Nationale de l'Eau de et l'Assainissement (ANEA) installed 17 handwashing stations in critical points in Bangui, including markets and bus stations, serving approximately 8,500 users per day. Community outreach animators have been trained on the operation of these stations and on sensitization messages for the users. The stations are opened twelve hours a day and water is regularly replenished.

In Kaga Bandoro (North) UNICEF installed 15 handwashing stations at water points in town. UNICEF also installed 200 handwashing stations in public places in Berberati (Southwest), the country's third-largest city, and 50 in Bossangoa (West). Together, these devices are serving an estimated 53,000 users per day.

### Continued access to essential Healthcare

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, UNICEF has been ensuring continuity of care in support of health and nutritional facilities. During the first two weeks of May, 4,959 people, including 2,472 children under 5 were treated for malaria, acute respiratory infections or diarrheal diseases, and 2,487 pregnant women received antenatal care in health facilities of Bangui, Bouar, Bambari and Kaga Bandoro. 88% of these women accepted to be tested for HIV, 2% tested positive and were put on antiretroviral treatment.

UNICEF also provided two malaria kits to the health check point at Beloko, the main border crossing with Cameroon, for the treatment of 2,000 people.

### Access to continuous education, child protection and GBV services

During the reporting period, 44,205 children, including 16,200 girls have been verified as having followed 17 lessons in French and Sango broadcast throughout the country by UNICEF partner Radio Ndeke Luka and a network of 10 community radios. The actual number of children following UNICEF-supported radio education programs is most probably much higher. Feedback received from the Education Districts (Inspection d'Académie - IA) showed that parents are satisfied with this teaching modality, which allows their children to attend lessons from home during the ongoing school closures.

To encourage radio education, UNICEF distributed an initial 2,985 solar radio sets to vulnerable households in Bouar (West), considered as the most high-risk area for COVID-19 outside of the capital, due to its central location on the main trade route to Cameroon.

In Bambari, the setting up of listening clubs offered the possibility to 7,268 children, including 3,412 girls, to listen to lessons through the radio. UNICEF partners All for Peace and Dignity (APD) and Vision et Développement (V&D) used this activity to also conduct a door-to-door awareness raising campaign on the prevention of COVID-19 transmission, reaching 7,360 people, including 3,650 women.

As part of its strategy to prevent and mitigate the social impacts of the epidemic, UNICEF ensures that children without a care provider have access to family tracing and reunification support as well as alternative care arrangements. This has been the case for 13 children in conflict with the law, who were released from Ngaragba Central Prison in Bangui in accordance with the government's preventive measures against COVID-19. Twelve of them have been reunited in Bangui and are currently being monitored by social workers from the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, the Family and Child Protection. Family tracing for the remaining released child is still ongoing. UNICEF, in collaboration with the judicial authorities, is also evaluating the situation of the remaining 16 detained children in order to determine the conditions for their future release.

During the reporting period, a total of 4,044 individuals (1,994 male and 2,050 female), including 2,309 children (1,148 boys and 1251 girls) attended awareness sessions on COVID-19 preventive measures, prevention of gender-based violence and psychosocial support. Since the beginning of the response a total of 5,004 individuals, mostly children, have participated in UNICEF-supported community-based psychosocial support and awareness raising on child protection in the context of COVID-19. Activities took place in the prefecture of Nana Grebizi, Ouaka and Haute Kotto, most specifically in Mbata-Sia, Kanga, Gazao-Mbres, Maloum, Tagbara, Seko, Ippy and Bria.

UNICEF CAR: [www.unicef.org/infobycountry/CAR.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/CAR.html)  
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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

	2020 Target (March – Dec20)	Total Results	Change since last report ▲ ▼
<b>RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (RCCE)</b>			
Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services	2,000,000	2,000,000	
Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms.	9,000		
<b>INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL (IPC)</b>			
Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services	175,000	78,000	67,500
Number of healthcare facilities reached with (one or more) WASH services and IPC equipment	60	2	1
Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	1,654		
Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)	1,654		
<b>CONTINUITY OF HEALTHCARE*</b>			
Number of children & women receiving essential healthcare services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV & GBV* care in UNICEF supported facilities	71,000	37,072	4,959
Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms	138,000	34,637	6,690
<b>ACCESS TO CONTINUOUS EDUCATION, CHILD PROTECTION &amp; GBV SERVICES</b>			
Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning	850,000	44,205	40,000
Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements	300	12	12
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support	2,500	5,004	4,040
Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation & referrals for survivors, including for PSEA	120	146	
<b>SOCIAL PROTECTION</b>			
Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian multi-sector cash grant for basic needs	5,000		

\* 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)	6,000,000	4,642,000	1,358,000	23%
Health & Nutrition	3,100,000	1,537,000	1,563,000	50%
Child Protection	1,500,000	500,000	1,000,000	67%
Education	5,300,000	820,000	4,480,000	85%
Humanitarian Cash Transfer	2,500,000	450,000	2,050,000	82%
Multisector	-	1,093,000	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,000,000</b>	<b>9,602,000</b>	<b>9,398,000</b>	<b>49%</b>