

## [BENIN]: COVID-19 Situation Report #22

[ 18 September – 02 October 2020]

unicef 

for every child

Situation in Numbers



**2,280** COVID-19 confirmed cases

**40** deaths



**156,669** children affected by school closures



**US\$ 13.0 M** funding required



*In So-Ava, UNICEF Staff and midwife talking about Covid-19 to mothers ©UNICEF*

### Situation overview

Since March 2020, a total of 2,357 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been identified in Benin out of 167,555 tests conducted. 77 new cases were identified in the last two weeks.

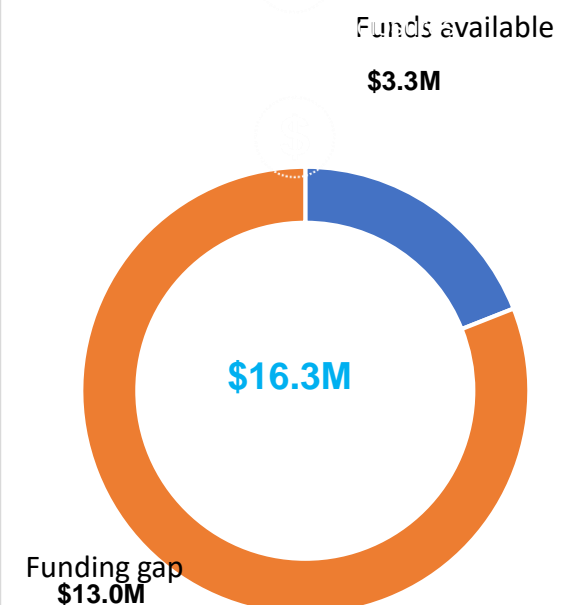
One death related to COVID-19 was recorded in the reporting period bringing the number of deaths to 41. Fatality rate stands at 1.7% whilst the recovery rate is 83.9%, with 1,973 recovered cases.

Number of children under 18 infected by the virus represent 15.7% of all confirmed cases.

### Key updates

- The most affected departments are all located in the former “cordon sanitaire”, namely, Littoral, Atlantique and Ouémé;
- 94.5% of confirmed cases are locally acquired;
- On 28 September 2020, **all students returned to school** with instructions on handwashing and wearing of masks;
- Compulsory wearing of face masks in public remain in place;
- In addition to mandatory tests upon arrival, the Government announced on 1 September that PCR tests were now required for all passengers departing from Cotonou International Airport. A fee of 50,000 FCFA (90 US\$) must be paid by all travelers.

### Funding Status



## Highlights



**4,359,297 million** people informed through mass media



**636,048** women and children received essential health services



**465,418** people benefited from WASH services



**1.7 million children** supported with distance learning



**8,166** children received psychosocial support



Dr Mariam Sylla Diene, Chief Health at Unicef Benin, discussing with the mother of an adolescent girl of 16 year old who had a baby boy freshly immunized ©UNICEF

## UNICEF's COVID-19 response

### Health and Nutrition

UNICEF Benin continues to support the Rapid Response Teams in the 3 most affected departments through the provision of vehicles to support cases management and contact tracing. The number of **trained health workers** on infection prevention and control, COVID-19 case management and reorganization of services **increased from 1,123** to 1,356 during the reporting period, with 13 health zones covered. As result of these training, 31 COVID screening centers have been made operational in 29 of the country's 77 municipalities. Thanks to the knowledge and skills acquired, trained health workers have become key players in the response compliance with barrier measures and awareness, through the establishment of health brigades within health facilities. In addition, the operation of the health brigade at the health zone guarantees a permanent and daily state of monitoring. Collaboration between rapid response teams and health training has been strengthened leading the improvement of the referral and the case management of suspected cases.

Regarding continuity of health services, the community awareness by Community Health Workers (CHW) and the reorganization of health services guaranteeing more security for the population and providers is leading to an increase in the supply and demand services for children and women. In UNICEF-supported areas, the number of women and children receiving essential health services, including immunization, antenatal and postnatal care, HIV care, increased from 524,481 to 636,048 during the reporting period. **A total of 4,256 community health workers trained contributed significantly to strengthening communication for the adoption of barrier measures within communities as well the search for suspected and contact cases. In addition, these CHW continued the management of children killer diseases in the community (malaria, diarrhoea**

**and pneumonia) as well as the screening and referral to health facilities of cases of malnutrition.**

The launch of the introduction in routine EPI of the Hep B vaccine at birth took place on 02 October 2020. This vaccine will prevent mother-to-child transmission, as well as the morbidity and mortality associated with the infection.



Prof Benjamin Hounkpatin, Health Minister, giving a first dose of hepatitis B vaccine to baby under 24 hours ©UNICEF

The continuity of IYCF services, including exclusive breastfeeding and dietary diversification through growth monitoring and complementary food cooking demonstration activities, are being ensured through home visits by support groups, NGO workers and CHW. As a result, 34,604 mothers and caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months received support and counselling. Among them, 9,570 mothers of children aged 0 to 5 months were reached for the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and, 25,034 mothers of children aged 6 to 23 months on breastfeeding, dietary diversification, and care for children.



## WASH

Government with UNICEF support continues remarkable actions in preventing COVID-19 and Cholera outbreak in the 4 most at-risk regions.

During this period, awareness raising sessions around preventive measures application covering hand hygiene, mask wearing and other COVID-19 hygiene protocols including household water treatment promotion was strengthened in markets, schools, health Centre, in communities to avoid slackening of these practices. At least 36,920 additional women learned how to practice water treatment and received water purification tablets. A total of 8302 wells were disinfected. UNICEF sustained access to safe water for 96,094 people. To date, 465,418 people benefited from critical WASH supply and services. As part of school re-opening, a visit to a sample of schools in the Ouémé region showed a diverse application of prevention measures. The majority of schools had handwashing facilities, but number is not enough and often not used, temperature screening is not done and the wearing of the mask is not generalized. It will be necessary to strengthen sensitization and supervision in these schools and encourage the government to take necessary actions to be able to meet the norms and standards of schools reopening. To support the reopening- norms and standards compliance, UNICEF, is in the process of developing a best appropriate and innovative -model of handwashing devices for schools that don't have access to handwashing services-.



Demonstration of hand washing - ©UNICEF

## RCCE

The Country office reached 29.833 additional people via social media publication around COVID-19. During these last month, in collaboration with the Departmental Directorates of Social Affairs, community relays, volunteers from NGOs, with the support of 1.021 of community leaders, organized home visits and group discussions, reaching 111.750 parents and children (22.989 children). In the health sector, the 4,256 community relays working with Health Zone integrated COVID-19 protective measures and messages into their

routine activity (prevention, promotion, care activities). So, over the past months, 126,303 parents are reached by their home visits and educational talks. In addition, 2.773 new people are in interaction with UNICEF publication via social media. To date, 858.327 people are engaged on COVID-19 prevention activities.

Based on feedbacks collected by community relays and volunteers working with Directorate of Social Affairs during the reporting period, 6,931 people shared their concerns and asked questions/clarifications about COVID-19, resulting to date, a cumulative of 28,958 people.



During the reporting period, 4 surveillance committees with 63 people were set up in the Borgou department. In the Zou department, 430 local leaders were trained to establish similar surveillance committees and 25 women groups started community awareness-raising sessions. Awareness-raising and advocacy meetings among 335 traditional leaders, religious leaders, traditional healers and political and administrative leaders were organized



Sensitization caravans are used to inform communities on COVID-19 in Lokossa  
©UNICEF

## Education

Following the reopening of primary schools, and as the lead of the COVID-19 local education group, UNICEF continues to advocate for the respect of prevention measures in schools and access to protective masks for all students and teachers. The academic year for 2020-2021 has started on 28 September 2020. The country had prepared the re-opening of all schools for this new academic year. UNICEF and other partners had supported Ministries of education to facilitate the back to school of all children in a secure environment by

providing handwashing equipment, and others material (hand sanitizer, sensitization material). UNICEF with support of its partners, especially Swiss Cooperation, EDUCO, Plan International and World Bank through Global Partnership for Education Funds had supported the back to school campaign and provided school supplies to 214,071 children including 100,943 girls enrolled in grade 1 and grade 2 in primary school and to 32,672 adolescents girls of grade 1 and grade 2 in lower secondary schools in vulnerable districts so as to facilitate their access to school and their retention. This will be extended to other districts with the financial support of the Global Partnership for Education.



UNICEF supported the back to school campaign by providing school supplies to 214,071 children including 100,943 girls ©UNICEF

## Child protection

Mental health and psychosocial support to children and adults affected by COVID-19 is on the upscale in Benin due to the creation of 47 safe spaces (17 new) for children. To date, these safe spaces have enabled **21,996** children (1,132 new girls and 1,304 new boys of whom 19 girls and 34 boys were disabled) **adults** (2,853 new women and 3,409 new men) to **receive psychosocial support**. During the reporting period, 187 new children (94 girls and 93 boys) benefited from a package of integrated services (legal, social, health), including psychosocial support, amounting to a total of 1,669 children.

To strengthen the child protection response to the pandemic in all communes (77), 179 new social assistants from the regional offices of the Social Affairs and Microfinance Ministry, animators from NGOs and volunteers (78 women and 101 men) in the twelve departments in the country were trained on the management of child-friendly spaces and positive parenting, bringing the total of trained community actors to

537. 434 community relay workers (107 women and 327 men of whom 47 new women and 3 new men), whose skills were strengthened by the government social workers on prevention and protection measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 were able to mobilize to date 1,021 (277 women and 744 men) religious and community leaders.

Also, these community relay workers together with these religious and community leaders reached out to 111,750 people in the communities (including 14,632 girls, 13,357 boys, 47,410 women and 36,351 men) who committed to fighting the pandemic.

625 actors (77 UNICEF staff and 548 implementing partners) trained on the mitigation of gender-based violence and/or on PSEA in the context of COVID-19, including 14 new actors (6 women and 8 men), are now better equipped to contribute to the prevention of such risks.

Following the successful completion of trainings on PSEA, **361 actors** (77 UNICEF and 284 implementing partners) now have **access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse**.

## Social Protection & Cash-based assistance

UNICEF and partners launched a Cash Working Group “Ad-Hoc Committee on Cash Transfers” to facilitate the coordination of cash-based interventions in response to COVID-19, with support from CashCap. As of September 2020, the Ad-Committee on Cash Transfers has merged with the Social Protection Working Group. UNICEF has provided support to the Ministry of Social Affairs to **design cash-based intervention for vulnerable families and children** focusing on preventing school drop out of adolescent girls impacted by school closures and child marriage. An initial transfer is planned for Q4 of 2020. A partnership with Care International for the implementation has been finalized and implementation has started. UNICEF has partnered with Social Watch Benin, a local network of NGOs, to assess the impact of COVID 19 on people living in the municipalities of intervention and municipalities affected by the pandemic and to assess the impacts of COVID 19 on budget allocation and execution in key social sectors. This assessment will inform early recovery interventions and advocacy to prevent negative impacts on social sector spending in 2021 national budget

## Adaptations to ongoing UNICEF programmes

- In the field of **child protection**, the Country Office is focusing its efforts on the **establishment of safe spaces** to provide psychosocial support for children and their families.

- In the field of **social protection**, priority is given to **linking urgent humanitarian cash transfers with long-term social protection programmes** and strengthening Government systems as well as humanitarian-development coordination.
- In the field of **education**, efforts to develop distance learning solutions through radio, TV and digital platforms are expected to **strengthen the resilience of the education system in the long-term**.
- In the field of **health**, UNICEF supports national authorities to **ensure the continuity of primary and essential health care services for all**. The WASH coordination cluster was also reinforced to coordinate the COVID-19 response with all stakeholders.
- In the CLTS implementation, new PCA signed with five NGO's in eight municipalities with an adaptation of the implementation approach starting with promotion of appropriate prevention measures on coronavirus infections, triggering steps will be done, after ensuring compliance and application of all barrier measures

## Funding Overview and Partnerships

Based on the national plan and its assessment of priority needs, UNICEF Benin submitted a COVID-19 response proposal to its Regional Office amounting to **US\$ 16,325,000** and which is integrated into UNICEF's Humanitarian Action for Children Novel Coronavirus (COVID-2019) Global Response. Innovative partnerships are being established, including the "Innov Covid-19 Benin Taskforce", a coalition of government, UN agencies, NGOs, CSOs, private sector companies and start-ups to develop emergency solutions to the crisis.

## External Media

UNICEF Benin published multimedia content on its digital platforms to sensitize the public on COVID-19 prevention measures and UNICEF efforts to combat the pandemic. 1 million people were reached through social media. The Country Office also regularly shares information about its work and impact with local and regional media. More than 15 articles and news reports about UNICEF interventions in Benin were published in the last month.

- [Rentrée scolaire 2020-2021 : Plus d'un milliard FCFA de kits scolaires offerts aux écoles](#)
- [L'UNICEF et le Système des Nations soutiennent les Jeunes Volontaires engagées contre la COVID-19](#) (Canal 3 Télévisions; [Twitter](#))
- [Lutte contre la Covid-19: L'Unicef fait un important don au gouvernement](#) (La Nation)
- [L'UNICEF soutient les radios communautaires de l'Alibori et du Borgou dans le contexte COVID-19](#) (Medium)
- [Les ASUKA transmettent les gestes barrières au citoyen à travers des fresques murales](#) (Sèmè City)

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| Summary of Programme Results  |  | UNICEF and IPs Response |               |
|---|--|-------------------------|---------------|
| Sector  |  | 2020 target             | Total results |
| <b>Risk Communication and Community Engagement</b>  |  |                         |               |
| Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services   |  | 5,553,773               | 4,359,297     |
| Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions   |  | 500,000                 | 858,327       |
| Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms |  | 30,000                  | 28,958        |
| <b>WASH and IPC</b>   |  |                         |               |
| Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services   |  | 500,000                 | 465,418       |
| Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)  |  | 3,000                   | 1,385         |
| Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)  |  | 6,750                   | 5379          |
| <b>Health</b>   |  |                         |               |
| Number of healthcare providers trained in detecting, referral and appropriate management of COVID-19 cases among children, pregnant and breastfeeding women               |  | 1,500                   | 1,356         |
| Number of children & women receiving essential healthcare services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV & GBV care in UNICEF supported facilities            |  | 500,000                 | 636,048       |
| Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms.                                       |  | 20,000                  | 34,604        |
| <b>Nutrition</b>  |  |                         |               |
| Number of children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)  |  | 15,000                  | 9,600         |
| <b>Education</b>  |  |                         |               |
| Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning  |  | 2,000,000               | 1,708,617     |
| Number of schools implementing safe school protocols (COVID-19 prevention and control)  |  | 15,811                  | 11,342        |
| <b>Child Protection and GBV</b>   |  |                         |               |
| Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements  |  | 1,000                   | 1,669         |
| Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support   |  | 15,000                  | 21,996        |
| Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation & referrals for survivors, including for PSEA                                   |  | 600                     | 625           |
| Number of children and adults that have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse   |  | 1,000                   | 361           |
| <b>Social Protection</b>  |  |                         |               |
| Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian multi-sector cash grant for basic needs  |  | 20,000                  | 0             |

## Funding Status

| Sector  | Funding requirements | Funds available  | Funding gap \$    | Gap %     |
|---|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| C4D / RCCE  | 2,500,000            | 123,042          | 2,376,958         | 95        |
| WASH & IPC  | 6,000,000            | 458,390          | 5,541,610         | 92        |
| Health & Nutrition  | 165,000              | 611,432          | 65,000            | 39        |
| Continued education, child protection, GBV services & social protection | 6,300,000            | 2,113,000        | 4,187,000         | 66        |
| Research  | 60,000               | 0                | 60,000            | 100       |
| Coordination, technical & operational costs                             | 1,300,000            | 0                | 1,300,000         | 100       |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>16,325,000</b>    | <b>3,305,864</b> | <b>13,019,136</b> | <b>78</b> |