

[BENIN]: COVID-19 Situation Report #20

[22 August – 4 September 2020]



for every child

Situation in Numbers



2,213 COVID-19 confirmed cases

40 deaths



156,669 children affected by school closures



US\$ 13.8 M funding required



A young girl plays in the safe space put in place for children in the Gogounou municipality, Alibori department ©UNICEF

Situation overview

Since March 2020, a total of 2,213 COVID-19 confirmed cases were identified in Benin out of 103,933 tests conducted. The situation seems to stabilize, with 98 new cases identified in the last two weeks.

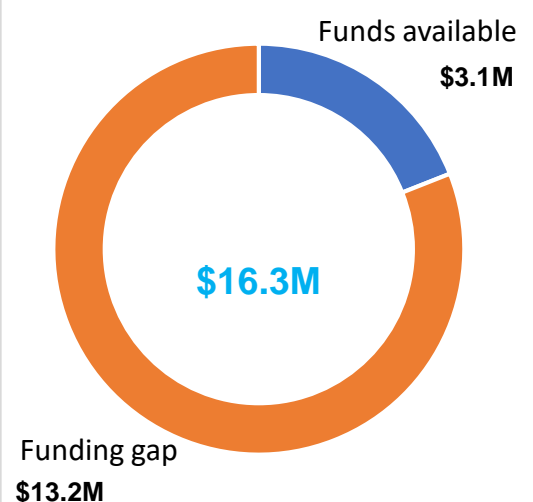
No death related to COVID-19 were recorded in the reporting period. Fatality rate remains at 1.8% whilst the recovery rate is 81.7%, with 1,818 recovered cases.

Number of children under 18 infected by the virus represent 16.2% 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 11 August 2020, **1st to 4th grade students returned to school** after the extension of school holidays in April;
- 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 100,000 FCFA (180 US\$) comprising all tests (arrival and departure) must be paid by all travelers.

Funding Status



Highlights



4.3 million people informed through mass media



382,675 women and children received essential health services



389,776 people benefited from WASH services



1.7 million children supported with distance learning



8,166 children received psychosocial support



A nurse assists a mother during a nutrition consultation in Bohicon ©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. In addition to the 9,000 RT-PCR tests provided to the Ministry of Health, UNICEF delivered more than 450,000 PPE (gloves, coveralls) and infection prevention equipment (hand sanitizer, soap) to the National Primary Health Care Agency. The number of **trained health workers** on infection prevention and control, COVID-19 case management and reorganization of services **increased from 849 to 1,014** during the reporting period, with 11 health zones covered. **A total of 1,150 community health workers were trained and provided with masks** and can now provide care for children under 5 with illnesses and reinforce community-based surveillance and sensitization on COVID-19. In UNICEF-supported areas, **506,607 women and children received essential health services**, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV care.

Follow-up with UNICEF Supply Division to accelerate shipment of vaccines to Benin enabled the Country Office to receive 31,000 vials of Penta and 652,198 doses of BCG. These supplies in vaccines helped refill stock at national level. UNICEF is working to ensure recommended IYCF practices are promoted in the COVID-19 context. As a result, **32,482 mothers and caregivers** of children aged 0 to 23 months **received support and counselling to breastfeed** and provided diversified complementary food to young children (6 to 23 months).

WASH

COVID-19 prevention activities are combined with cholera outbreak prevention in the 4 most at risk regions. To this end, 135 additional leaders and community frontline workers received capacity-building on cholera and COVID-19 infection prevention. 70 hygienists were trained on disinfection. In these same regions, UNICEF supported the distribution of water purification tablets and the promotion of household water treatment. 3,449 wells were disinfected. As a result, **UNICEF sustained access to safe water for 41,918 people**. UNICEF continues its efforts to guarantee access to WASH service for vulnerable children and their family. 2,147 new household handwashing devices (tippy tap) were set up in partnerships with targeted municipalities, regional directorates for sanitation and NGOs. These efforts enabled 17,667 households to practice handwashing to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. To this day, **389,776 people benefited from critical WASH supply and services**.



A child washes his hands in the village of Avinouhoué, bordering Togo, using a handwashing device provided by UNICEF ©UNICEF

RCCE

During the reporting period, 139,225 people took part and engaged in home visits and group discussions, amounting to a cumulative total of **610,779 people reached**. These efforts are led by 270 young NGO workers, in partnership with 760 community leaders. After the reopening of classes, young volunteers organized sensitization sessions in schools in the Mono Department, reaching more than 200 primary school students. They also supported women's associations in producing local mask, set up handwashing devices in public places and monitored respect of COVID-19 protection measures with local authorities in six cities. Based on feedbacks collected, young volunteers reinforced sensitization efforts with families and identified priority needs and concerns, which were then shared with relevant authorities. In the last two weeks, **20,784 people shared their concerns and asked questions/clarifications about COVID-19**.



Door-to-door campaign led by a dozen young volunteers in Ouedeme Adja ©UNICEF

During the reporting period, 1,024 relays were trained, amounting to a total of **4,256 community relay trained**. In the Borgou department, 4 surveillance committees with 63 people were set up. 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 Country Office visited several schools in the Northern part of Benin to monitor school reopening and sensitize communities on the importance of education. UNICEF distributed handwashing stations to 2,847 schools. **UNICEF provided handwashing equipment to 452 primary school examination centres, benefiting 141,503 students**. The Government's proposal to the Global Partnership for Education on supporting response and early recovery of the education sector in response to COVID-19 was approved for a total of USD\$ 7 million.



A mother reads school lessons for her children in Cotonou ©UNICEF

Child protection

To date, **8,166 children** (599 new girls and 673 new boys) **adults** (358 new women and 372 new men) **received psychosocial support**. During the reporting period, 209 new children (160 girls and 49 boys) benefited from a package of integrated services (legal, social, health), including psychosocial support, amounting to a total of 917 children.



UNICEF Representative discusses child marriage during COVID-19 with the King of Parakou and imams from Parakou Central Mosque ©UNICEF

To strengthen child protection in all communes (77), 38 new social assistants (16 women, 22 men) from NGOs and the departmental directorates of Social Affairs of the Atlantic, Littoral, Borgou, Atakora, Collines, Oueme, Mono, Kouffo and Zou departments were trained on the management of child-friendly spaces and positive parenting, bringing the total of trained community actors to 159. Following the successful completion of trainings on the mitigation of gender-based violence and 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. UNICEF is working on **designing a 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. The partnership with Care International for the implementation is being finalized. UNICEF is partnering 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 is ongoing.

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.

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.

- [L'UNICEF et le Système des Nations soutiennent les Jeunes Volontaires engagées contre la COVID-19](#) (Canal 3 Television; [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
Risk Communication and Community Engagement			
Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services		5,553,773	4,328,990
Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions		500,000	612,003
Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms		30,000	20,784
WASH and IPC			
Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services		500,000	389,776
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	715
Health			
Number of healthcare providers trained in detecting, referral and appropriate management of COVID-19 cases among children, pregnant and breastfeeding women		1,500	1,014
Number of children & women receiving essential healthcare services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV & GBV care in UNICEF supported facilities		500,000	506,607
Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms.		20,000	32,482
Nutrition			
Number of children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)		15,000	9,600
Education			
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
Child Protection and GBV			
Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements		1,000	917
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support		15,000	8,166
Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation & referrals for survivors, including for PSEA		600	585
Number of children and adults that have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse		1,000	361
Social Protection			
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	1,870,000	4,430,000	70
Research	60,000	0	60,000	100
Coordination, technical & operational costs	1,300,000	0	1,300,000	100
Total	16,325,000	3,062,864	13,262,136	81