

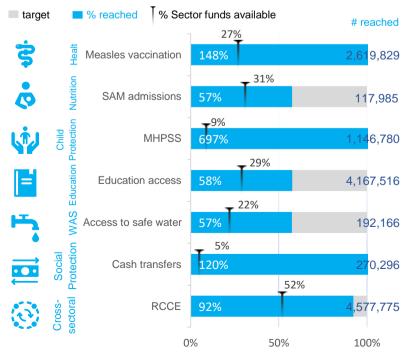
## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Throughout 2022, children continued to face multidimensional humanitarian crises across West and Central Africa region. UNICEF's Regional Humanitarian Appeal for Children focuses on 10 countries without a dedicated inter-agency Humanitarian Response Plan, but with unmet humanitarian needs.

In Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo, UNICEF supported populations facing rising emergency needs and a deteriorating security situation due to the impacts of spill-over from conflicts in the Central Sahel. On the border between The Gambia and Senegal, clashes between Senegalese security forces and separatist groups in March and April 2022 resulted in population displacement and humanitarian needs. Across the region, public health threats and disease outbreak remain widespread, from COVID-19 to Marburg Virus and Mpox, as well as persistent outbreaks of malaria, cholera, and other diseases. UNICEF Country Offices also supported populations facing natural hazards including seasonal floods.

#### **UNICEF's Response and Funding Status**

Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo



# West and Central Africa Regional Office Humanitarian Situation Report



## Situation in Numbers



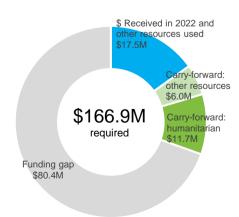
**60 million** children in need of humanitarian assistance



### **215,227** new COVID-19 cases in 2022 in WCAR, 0.69% case fatality rate in WCAR (Consolidated data from WHO, as of 31 Dec)

## UNICEF Appeal 2022 US\$ 116.9 million

#### Funding status (in US\$)



carry-over from the previous year; and repurposed funds with agreement from donors.

Many of the challenges being faced in West and Central Africa are cross-border or multi-country crises. In this context, UNICEF's strength and connectivity across all countries in the region has enabled a more effective and coordinated response.

In addition to tackling emergency needs in the countries included in this regional appeal, UNICEF's Regional Office also continued to support large-scale emergency responses in countries with a stand-alone HAC appeal (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Nigeria). Entire communities continue to be caught in the middle of unrelenting conflict, triggering massive displacement both internally and across borders and increasing vulnerability to human rights violations and sexual and gender-based violence. By the end of 2022, the number of displaced persons (including IDPs, refugees and asylum-seekers) across WCAR was estimated at 15 million people, including over 9 million children. The crisis in the Central Sahel remained a crisis of access, with ever-shrinking humanitarian space, and with security and political spillover effects on neighbouring countries.

UNICEF continues to lead coordination mechanisms for emergency responses at both country and regional levels. In the regional hub of Dakar, this includes leadership of the child protection, education, nutrition, resilience, risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) and WASH working groups.

### Benin

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

COVID-19 infection rates remained low from January to December 2022. By December 2022, 27,982 positive cases and 163 deaths were recorded, compared to 25,440 cases and 162 deaths at the end of December 2021. The Government launched an accelerated vaccination campaign from January to March 2022. The vaccination against COVID-19 has been integrated into the routine vaccination since 1 April 2022. The total number of people vaccinated against COVID-19 currently is 2,748,452 equivalent to 35.5 per cent of the targeted population and 21.3 per cent of the national population. However, vaccine reluctance among elderly people and people living with comorbidities remains a challenge.

The security situation in northern Benin has significantly deteriorated. Non-state armed groups have perpetrated about 17 attacks against security forces and park rangers in 2022. About 677 displaced people from Matéri municipality and 1,311 refugees from neighbouring Burkina Faso were registered. The security context, coupled with growing food insecurity, highlights a precarious and fragile environment for children and their families. According to UNICEF estimates, there are currently more than 2.3 million people – mainly children, girls and women - at risk in northern Benin, particularly in the border areas.

In 2022, Benin experienced on of the worst floods in recent memory. Vulnerable to the impact of climate change, the country has faced heavy rainfall, overflowing rivers and flooding. The number of communes affected by flooding has risen from 31 communes (40.25 per cent) in 2020 to 39 communes (50 per cent) in 2022, affected 382,933 people across the country, including 187,637 children. Floods damaged public health facilities, schools and water facilities. To minimize the impact of floods on the children's lives, UNICEF Benin provided an integrated response.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

#### Sahel spill over response

To reinforce prevention mechanisms and strengthen community resilience, UNICEF and its partners are providing a holistic package of services (education, health, nutrition and child protection) for children and their families. UNICEF and partners are also providing life-skills education on social cohesion, constructing WASH infrastructure, promoting socioeconomic integration for unemployed youth, and supporting local authorities to develop emergency preparation and response plans. UNICEF's approach is twofold: strengthening community resilience and ensuring essential service continuity delivery in areas of high vulnerability.

To reinforce its interventions, UNICEF opened a new field office in nothern Benin's Natitingou, which helps scale-up programmes in the Atacora and Donga departments. A standby agreement with CARE Benin/Togo was signed in

preparation for humanitarian cash transfers to refugees, displaced persons and locally affected households. A total of 66,166 youth and adolescents are mobilized as peer educators to promote social cohesion in their communities and more than 460 out-of-school and unemployed youth were supported with training, equipment and seed funding to launch businesses. A total of 145 local sanitation committees are now operational and contribute to strengthening access to WASH services. Community resilience is being strengthened through the promotion of microfinance initiatives and the generation of income-generating activities for women and youth.

#### Health

In response to deteriorating security conditions in northern Benin, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health on preparedness and response in health, nutrition and WASH sectors and ensured the pre-positioning of equipment and medical kits to cover 64,356 people including 11,881 children under 5 years, 3,444 pregnant women and 1,445 refugees/ internal displaced persons.

In 2022, the country reported 13 new cases of vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 in five departments (Atlantique, Borgou, Donga, Littoral and Ouémé) with six cases of Acute flaccid paralysis. A nationwide response was organized in October 2022.

From January to September 2022, with UNICEF support, a total of 1,763,782 people including 830,977 children under five, received essential care in the three northern departments affected by the security crisis (Alibori, Atacora and Borgou). Malaria remained the most common morbidity among children under five (52 per cent). The main cause of death among children under five was acute respiratory infections, accounting for 75 per cent of the 544 deaths recorded.

#### **Nutrition**

An early warning nutrition surveillance system was set up in July 2022 with the support of the Ministry of Health and UNICEF, allowing monitoring on a real-time basis of the progressive effect of the conflict spillover on nutrition indicators. Between March and September 2022, the number of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) cases increased by 32 per cent in the departments of Alibori, Atacora and Borgou. For the most affected commune of Tanguieta in Atacora, the number of new cases of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) has almost quadrupled compared to the same period last year. A total of 23,413 new cases (11,472 girls and 11,941 boys) of SAM were admitted and treated in outpatient and in-patient therapeutic units with good performance treatment indicators including a cured rate of 91 per cent, a death rate of 2.4 per cent and defaulter rate of 5.2 per cent, which are all within WHO standard benchmarks. Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) supplies to cover the immediate need of 1,000 children suffering from SAM have been prepositioned in health zones to avoid any stock out in most affected remote areas. In addition, 153,615 mothers and caregivers of children aged from 0 to 23 months were reached in 2022 for the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and diet diversity awareness.

#### **Child Protection**

UNICEF Benin supported the government in implementing a national child protection (CP) preparedness and response plan, which was established to address the effects of conflict spillover in the country's North. A total of 235 persons were trained as trainers on Child Protection in Emergency (CPiE) and/or Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). All 1,445 refugees/Internally displaced persons, including 865 children, received CP emergency kits and 400 additional kits are prepositioned. The Ministry of Social Affairs activated 4 CPiE sub-working groups in the two affected departments. A total of 2,688 members of community-based CP surveillance committees in these departments and 2,915 community volunteers across the 12 departments were equipped on CP/PSEA for improved prevention and referral of vulnerable children to municipal CP structures. Additionally, 75,599 children (40,404 girls) and 16,441 parents/caregivers (10,474 females) received psychosocial support across the 12 departments, and 15,652 children received integrated care, including 1,882 children in Alibori and Atacora (with 11 unaccompanied/separated from their incarcerated parents in the context of security threats). A total of 215,485 women, men, girls and boys were sensitized on GBV risk mitigation and prevention. Related to PSEA, a total of 314,007 community actors were briefed on SEA reporting mechanism, giving them access to safe channels to report SEA. A total of 124,601 children/adolescents/youth benefited from life skills and peer education to promote social cohesion, peace and challenge violence against children/gender-based violence/child marriage (VAC/GBV/CM).

#### **Education**

Funds from the European Union enabled UNICEF and partners to improve basic education in communes affected by the Sahel crisis. In September 2022, UNICEF facilitated the enrolment and retention of 89,530 children in first, second, and sixth grades in primary schools and first and second grades in lower secondary in the communes affected by the Sahel crisis spillover by providing school supplies. In addition, UNICEF advocated for the opening of the schools closed in some areas because of threats to families by non-identified armed groups against the schooling of children. To reduce school attendance costs for parents and communities, a total of 368,024 children (including 195,719 girls) in

primary and secondary schools in 38 communes benefited from the distribution of school kits. UNICEF advocated for the opening of the schools closed in some areas (Matéri, Karimama and Malanville) following flooding and security threats. However, nine schools in Matéri and Karimama remained close at this date due to fears of attack. A total of 5,743 schools implementing safe schools protocols since they have received handwashing equipment and sensitization materials.

In addition, with the support of EDUCO, some interventions are realized to support youth and adolescents on resilience and peace building through vocational training sessions in border communes with countries affected by Sahel emergency.

#### WASH

In response to cholera, COVID-19 outbreaks and floods, UNICEF provided access to WASH services to 650,841 people through the distribution of tablets of aquatabs, soap, well treatment, and awareness activities on hygiene good practice. The promotion of hand washing practices as prevention against COVID-19 and cholera continued to allow 115,766 people to have access to basic hygiene services, thanks to the installation and use of 19,630 hand washing devices. A total of 121 schools (serving 30,250 children) benefited from the rehabilitation of 979 hand washing stations, and 697 health centres received WASH kits and PPE equipment. To ensure the safe reopening of school after flooding and cholera outbreaks, 273 schools were disinfected to allow 27,940 children including 14,249 girls to learn in safe school environment.

In the northern parts of the country affected by conflict spillover, UNICEF worked through a humanitarian-developmentpeace nexus approach to support the development of local contingency plans in three municipalities and reached 25,079 people with community-led total sanitation approaches, 1,600 of whom had access to appropriate sanitation services in three municipalities of the Atacora region. A total of 1,634 people and all the care services of nine health centres of Alibori region had access to basic water services through the rehabilitation of manual pumps and solar pumps with sustainability storage system and water distribution with tap. Additionally, 3,171 students in Malanville Municipality gained access to proper sanitation facilities.

#### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

The Ministry of Health with UNICEF and WHO support continued to promote COVID-19 vaccination to improve immunization coverage in Benin, generate demand and manage rumours. UNICEF supported the implementation of a national campaign comprising mass media communication activities and local communication activities with community relays, establishment of community engagement committees, advocacy among local leaders, social mobilization, technical support to monitor rumours through the green line 136, and a digital communication campaign with active youth participation. More than 60 radio stations were involved to strengthen communication, and a digital campaign was implemented to reach young people to better respond to rumours.

Community interventions were supported by the production and dissemination of programmes promoting behaviour change, which reached nearly 8,182,874 people. In addition, 383,251 children/adolescents/youth and 491,388 parents were mobilized in interpersonal communication initiatives for behaviour change against GBV. They shared their perceptions and feedback on the interventions that helped refine the strategies of the response.

In response to new polio cases, the Government of Benin with the support of UNICEF organized in October 2022 an immunization campaign with a communication and technical support plan. According to Kobo data collects for a total of 83,057 participants in advocacy meetings before the campaign, 22,383 were women. With the support of social mobilizers, awareness-raising was carried out in 603,161 households with 1,239,982 sensitized persons, including 608,848 women. Overall, 9,436 mobilizers and 5,323 criers were followed during the campaign.

In the northern region of the country, UNICEF is committed to strengthening the resilience of youth, adolescents and families in these localities. For example, an extensive training programme on promoting the abandonment of child marriage, violent discipline, parenting skills, etc. has engaged 378 watchdog committees addressing norms harmful to children, especially girls and adolescents. Moreover, 3,010 community actors and agents of social promotion centres were mobilized in awareness, research and referral of child victims of violence for their care by the competent services.

# Human Interest Stories and External Media

### Response to the Sahel spillover in northern Benin

- 150 youths graduate from UNICEF socioeconomic reintegration training programmes and receive support to launch their business: <u>https://www.unicef.org/benin/communiqu%C3%A9s-de-presse/precov-150-jeunes-dipl%C3%B4m%C3%A9s-dans-divers-m%C3%A9tiers-de-lartisanat-en-situation</u>
- EU Ambassadors conduct a field visit to learn about UNICEF programmes for girls' education and against child marriage: <u>https://www.facebook.com/Unicef229/posts/pfbid0eZ5UdhWvjkaMtRgPHWymVb7XRu6wDtM9gfWvCL4g6j7h</u> N14548u8NiThZ57USPksI
- Day of the African Child 2022: children from the Atacora department advocate for an end to harmful practices affecting their rights: https://www.unicef.org/benin/recits/journ%C3%A9e-de-lenfant-africain-2022
- UNICEF Benin holds its first Country Management Team (CMT) in northern Benin and strengthens its presence in regions most at risk: <u>https://www.facebook.com/Unicef229/posts/pfbid02gmBRCCvQHRF31KfqU9uNbZ3WkuDq1uE1ZgWJthRQ2</u> eGQsbsqQiaobyPKzsxMyX9RI
- UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Angélique Kidjo celebrates resilience of girls and young people during visit to Benin<u>https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unicef-goodwill-ambassador-ang%C3%A9lique-kidjo-celebrates-resilience-girls-and-young</u>
- UNICEF Benin officially opens its office in Natitingou to strengthen its presence in the North : <u>https://www.facebook.com/Unicef229/posts/pfbid02BDKkDqThvfzeLZLoJPQYw6vs7oZjSTidY8YPY9tnatAE87</u> <u>GHBiFxY9g4C2RwqVdal</u>

### COVID-19 response

- UNICEF donates equipment and materials to the Government of Benin to strengthen the resilience of its health system <a href="https://www.unicef.org/benin/communiqu%C3%A9s-de-presse/lunicef-fait-don-de-mat%C3%A9riels-roulants-et-d%C3%A9quipements-destin%C3%A9s-%C3%A0-renforcer">https://www.unicef.org/benin/communiqu%C3%A9s-de-presse/lunicef-fait-don-de-mat%C3%A9riels-roulants-et-d%C3%A9quipements-destin%C3%A9s-%C3%A0-renforcer</a>
- France, Germany, Latvia donate new COVID-19 vaccine doses through COVAX
  <u>https://www.unicef.org/benin/communiqu%C3%A9s-de-presse/la-france-lallemagne-et-la-lettonie-font-don-de-nouvelles-doses-de-vaccins</u>
- UNICEF Benin and the Community Radio Federation join forces to improve access to reliable information on COVID-19 vaccination <u>https://www.facebook.com/Unicef229/posts/pfbid02gczNvExQVnY8ut5iUVoe17iZjNJoPeJg7gAiJbSuQDthc7C</u> 3kH2sLgvLRCm4LnV2I
- Over 180 U-Reporters for deconstructing COVID-19 vaccination rumors : <u>https://www.unicef.org/benin/recits/plus-de-180-u-reporters-pour-la-d%C3%A9construction-des-rumeurs-sur-la-vaccination-anti-covid-19</u>
- Reward for the best productions by journalists on COVID -19 and the best projects aimed at combating false information : <u>https://www.facebook.com/Unicef229/posts/pfbid02APVNZ4tRJPTM6oM13Ky6VUMiejAFyjVLY6kRy6HvgQm</u> S2xCT69aXoxhXyPUKci9QI

### <u>Other</u>

- UNICEF, the Government and young people join forces to improve the health and wellbeing of adolescent girls <u>https://www.unicef.org/benin/recits/unicef-gouvernement-et-jeunes-mobilis%C3%A9s-pour-</u> am%C3%A9liorer-la-sant%C3%A9-et-le-bien-%C3%AAtre-des
- UNICEF series "Vaillante" screened in Cotonou to sensitize public against child marriage <u>https://twitter.com/UNICEF\_Benin/status/1504918786696261634</u>
- Launch of the meningitis immunization campaign in cooperation with Government and WHO
  <u>https://www.facebook.com/Unicef229/posts/pfbid029e3gFYYh6wW5KYHmvaXD8N2GFsn24nbJdF5KKVXXKr</u>
  <u>xMWRtK3T2bJGGt8A7foqcYI</u>
- U-Reporters and the EU delegation to Benin discuss youth employment, training and innovation sideline of EU-Africa Business Forum <u>https://www.facebook.com/Unicef229/posts/pfbid0ScMkwQsZw1QEAGQR8QQW5DCTj59HsZgf7DaXQpXBy</u> 8MYF33as6qZGqKRBdXyz3N5I

- School kit distribution : More than 665,000 learners impacted for the start of the 2022-2023 school year : <u>https://www.gouv.bj/actualite/1904/operation-distribution-kits-scolaires-plus-665.000-apprenants-impactes-rentree-scolaire-2022-2023/</u>
- UNICEF lights up the Amazon in blue for the respect of girls' rights in Benin :
  <u>https://www.unicef.org/benin/communiqu%C3%A9s-de-presse/lunicef-illumine-lamazone-en-bleu-pour-le-respect-des-droits-des-filles-au</u>
- 41 villages certified free of child marriage in Kandi and Tchaourou in northern Benin: <u>https://www.unicef.org/benin/communiqu%C3%A9s-de-presse/41-villages-certifi%C3%A9s-exempts-de-mariage-denfants-%C3%A0-kandi-et-tchaourou-au</u>

## Cote d'Ivoire

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The security situation in Côte d'Ivoire stabilized in 2022, with just one significant incident attributed to non-state armed group (NSAG) activity, compared to 12 incidents in 2021. In February 2022 an improvised explosive device was discovered near Téhini (Bounkani region) and defused by national security forces.

However, ongoing conflict in Burkina Faso has led to cross-border population movements in January, March, May and December 2022, with affected people moving from Burkina Faso into Côte d'Ivoire. The number of displaced people recorded rose by nearly nine-fold, from 3,222 people at the end of 2021 to 16,476 people in December 2022. All the displaced are being hosted in already fragile communities. UNICEF provided humanitarian assistance to children and families from both the displaced and host communities.

Côte d'Ivoire also remains at risk of epidemics, particularly along the border with Guinea. During the first 11 months of 2022, 5,868 suspected measles cases were reported. The country also continued to cope with COVID-19: some 87,912 cases and 830 deaths were reported since March 2020. The largest number of COVID-19 cases were recorded in January 2022: 9,714 cases and 65 deaths.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

As part of its response to conflict spillover in the country's North, UNICEF strengthened coordination mechanisms to improve emergency preparedness and response. The four emergency sector groups led by UNICEF (nutrition; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); education; and the child protection area of responsibility) met regularly, updated their plans and contributed to updating the inter-agency contingency plan. The UN Country Team is expected to approve the plan in early 2023.

UNICEF also updated the mapping of local organizations operational in northeastern Côte d'Ivoire and followed up on previous distribution of supplies to displaced populations and host communities.

In September 2022, the country office organized a five-day workshop to reinforce internal capacity on emergency preparedness and response. The humanitarian partnership with the national Red Cross committee was extended in order to undertake monitoring of population movements in the northeast and establish multisectoral community-based interventions, in case of a humanitarian crisis. All relevant programme cooperation agreements were amended to include a 10 per cent emergency response clause.

UNICEF allocated the US\$300,000 to the pre-positioning of WASH and nutrition supplies in the north, where basic services are very limited, food insecurity is increasing and vulnerability to climate shocks is high. The Russia-Ukraine war also impacted food security. In November 2022, the World Food Programme conducted a market survey, which indicated a sharp increase in the average price of staple foods nationwide: cassava (+22 per cent), imported rice (+21 per cent) and yams (+20 per cent). Overall inflation was estimated at 5.2 per cent, while food prices rose by 10.8 per cent.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Source: Sous-Prefet of Tougbo. According to data from UNHCR registration, there are 4,085 refugees, as of December 19, 2022

### Health

Humanitarian emergency funds allowed the country office to continue support for the COVID-19 response, particularly the immunization campaign. From January to December 2022, a total of 16,944,129 people received vaccinations against COVID-19, of whom 10.991.408 were fully vaccinated. COVID-19 vaccines are now available in all parts of the country and integrated into routine immunization services. In June 2022, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF conducted a COVID-19 intra-action review to analyse bottlenecks and provide recommendations to the Ministry of Health (MoH) and partners. Key recommendations included: clarification of coordination mecanisms, integration of COVID-19 vaccines into routine services (which is now the case) and consideration of a 'multidemics' plan instead of relying on disease-specific plans.

Building on these recommendations, UNICEF and WHO successfully advocated for the development of a 'multi-demic transition plan for the Ebola Treatment Centre located in Kassiapleu, near Man, which was rehabilitated following an Ebola alert in 2021. Since the Centre has rarely been used for Ebola, it was proposed that it should function as a routine health centre in the absence of an emergency, but with clearly defined criteria and protocols for converting to an emergency centre during public health emergencies. The transition plan was approved by MoH in November 2022.

Through its regular resources, the country office provided medical equipment and essential drugs to two health centres in the northeast to meet the needs of an influx of people from Burkina Faso.

#### **Nutrition**

In January 2022 the MoH's national nutrition programme (NNP), with support from UNICEF, gathered UN agencies and NGOs at a workshop on nutrition in emergencies. The main outcome of the workshop was the development of a national roadmap and preliminary discussions for the development of simplified approaches to managing acute malnutrition. As part of this process, a working group was established under NNP leadership to lead nutrition-in-emergency activities.

Through its regular resources, the CO supported NNP efforts to strengthen access to essential nutrition interventions through training for healthcare providers and delivery of essential supplies.

In the northern regions of the country, from January to October 7,833 of the children screened for severe acute malnutrition were admitted to the programme (3,760 girls and 4,073 boys). Active malnutrition screening took place mid-August 2022 in the country's northern regions. Capacity-building for health workers is planned for January 2023 in the same regions.

### **Child protection**

Humanitarian emergency (HAC) funding allowed UNICEF to produce and equip social workers with communication materials aimed at strengthening community awareness about violence. During 2022, the country office supported 167 social centres across the country through cash transfers, allowing them to provide direct care (medical care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, etc.) to 5,078 child victims of violence, abuse and exploitation (3,437 girls and 1,641 boys).

In June 2022, the country office strengthened the capacity of 54 social workers from the Bounkani and Tchologo regions in northern Côte d'Ivoire to protect children during emergencies, including mental health and psychosocial support. A total of 34 social actors (13 women and 21 men) were also trained on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. By the end of 2022, social services in the two regions had addressed 561 cases of child victims of violence, abuse, and exploitation. To strengthen violence-prevention efforts and raise community awareness, 30 child protection committees were established in the two regions.

The Child Protection Committees installed have enabled more active and significant participation of the communities in the projects set up within them. They have also triggered a more pronounced interest in child protection issues and the taking of initiatives aimed at a protective community of children (establishment of safe and secure spaces for children, awareness-raising on the protection of child, reporting cases of violence to specialized services).

In December 2022, a PSEA risk assessment was conducted in the localities of Laleraba, Diawala and Kawala in the Tchologo region. This assessment consisted of interviews and focus groups with communities and key informants. The analysis of the results of the survey is in progress.

Together, newly trained social workers and the new child protection committees reached 53,648 adults (29,939 women; 23,709 men) who attended child protection awareness-raising sessions.

#### **Education**

In 2022, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop a contingency plan for emergency response, including to the risk of additional conflict spill-over from the Central Sahel. Members of the education-in-emergencies (EiE) working group received further training on EiE and disaster risk management.

Following UNICEF advocacy, the Togolokay primary school (in Bounkani region in the north) that was closed following an attack in April 2021 has now re-opened, allowing about 100 school children to start the 2022–2023 school year.

The country office allocated US\$200,000 in thematic emergency funding to the education section to develop an innovative model for ensuring continuity of education in case of school closure. To do so, UNICEF worked closely with the MoE to develop computer tablets preloaded with the e-learning programme 'My school at home' that could be prepositioned in communities alongside printed self-learning booklets for children and guides for community educators.

#### WASH

The WASH contingency plan was approved by national authorities. In addition, the national WASH-in-emergency sector group put in place regional coordination mechanisms in the west and north of the country.

Through its regular resources, the country office continued its support of the national COVID-19 response, including WASH interventions. During 2022, new handwashing stations benefitted 4,823 girls and 5,544 boys from 19 schools. Forty-eight additional health centres in the Abidjan Region (COVID-19 epicentre) were equipped with permanent facilities allowing health workers, patients and visitors to practice regular handwashing.

UNICEF ensured that drinking water services were available in Tougbo, Moromoro and Bole (in the north), where the majority of people fleeing Burkina Faso were hosted. Thanks to Dutch funding, seven hand-pumps were repaired, and ten new pumps installed. Thanks to the Peace-Building Fund (PBF), the country office was able to equip the village of Laleraba (bordering Burkina Faso) with a solar pump to extend water services both to the community and to the school, health facility and border health control post, benefitting 1,600 people (832 men; 768 women). The design of the water point considered the women's practice to make water collection safer and easier. The equipment contributed to social cohesion, resilience and peacebuilding. In 2023, PBF funding will support replication of this pilot system in other villages along the border.

In November 2022, heavy rainfall caused flooding in Agboville (southern Côte d'Ivoire), affecting 1,498 people from 214 households. Those affected were provided with hygiene items and education sessions on how to avoid waterborne diseases. This response was provided in collaboration with the MoH Directorate of Public Hygiene and through a humanitarian partnership agreement with the national Red Cross.

#### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

The country office implemented SBC activities using HAC funding. The COVID-19 online information centre, hosted on the U-Report platform, is still available by texting the keyword CORONA to 1366. This information is also available on Facebook and WhatsApp. 150 Young bloggers were trained to identify, track and respond to 483 'fake news' related to COVID-19. Also, over 10,000 COVID-19 rumours have been addressed by young bloggers.

UNICEF supported the MoH in the design and dissemination of messages related to COVID-19, dengue, Marburg fever and monkeypox. An estimated 18,294,746 people were reached with these messages through traditional media such as TV, radio, posters, billboards, web and social media, interpersonal and community communication as part of the national campaign to combat COVID-19.

#### UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire 🥝 21 juin · 🕲

C'est la saison des pluies et il est important pour tous de garder les bons réflexes ! 📥 Pour d'autres conseils, envoyez PLUIE par SMS au 1366.

C'est gratuit et votre geste peut sauver des vies. Quelques réflexes à avoir en saison des pluies Restez informé(e)s Coupez les alimentations en gaz et en électricité लि Contactez vos secours en cas d'urgence Protégez vos documents importants contre l'eau unicef 🕲

#### **Envoyez PLUIE**

#### UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire 🤗 /embre · 🕥

Plus d'1.6 million de personnes ont été vaccinées lors de la dernière Campagne nationale de vaccination contre la COVID-19 dont 504.022 jeunes âgés de 12 à 17 ans.

L'UNICEF et ses partenaires appuient le renforcement de la vaccination des élèves dans les établissements scolaires et secondaires du pays pour ensemble mettre définitivement fin à la pandémie de la COVID.

#### Auswärtiges Amt





# 1 c'est bien, 2 c'est mieux. N'oubl<mark>iez p</mark>as de faire votre 2<sup>ème</sup> dose de <mark>vaccin</mark> contre la COVID-19.

#### UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire 12 avril · 🕄

Les vaccins aident à construire un avenir sain pour tous les enfants.

De la polio à la rougeole, l'UNICEF et ses partenaires travaillent chaque jour pour fournir aux

#### enfants des vaccins qui sauvent des vies. Pour chaque enfant, la santé. 💙





...

UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire 🥝

Nous avons tous un rôle à jouer pour mettre fin à la pandémie de COVID-19.

En vous faisant vacciner, vous contribuez à vous protéger et à protéger votre communauté.

28 avril · 🕥

#LongueViePourTous

....

pour chaque enfan

...

316 C'est le nombre d'élèves du groupe scolaire de Blapleu qui ont pu participer en toute tranquillité à l'examen d'entrée en 6ème grâce à l'appui du bureau de l'UNICEF à Man à la suite de dégâts

causés par des tempêtes. Lire la suite de l'histoire sur: https://uni.cf/3ohHDls

Pour chaque enfant, le droit à l'éducation!

...

...

## Human Interest Stories and External Media

BBC "Panorama" documentary (with the example of the COVID vaccination campaign in Côte d'Ivoire) "Why Aren't We Vaccinating the World?" <u>https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0014ryv</u>

## **Equatorial Guinea**

### Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

As of 31 December 2022, Equatorial Guinea had carried out 400,433 COVID-19 tests since the beginning of the pandemic, with 17,089 of them confirmed positive, and a resulting positivity rate of 0.0 per cent. No new waves of COVID-19 were identified during 2022. A total of 214,032 people were vaccinated with two doses by the end of December 2022 (17.5 per cent of the total population), with 10,675 newly vaccinated in 2022. A total of 488,433 doses of the Sinopharm vaccine were administered. The country office conducted a KAP survey on COVID-19 among health workers, teachers and students. Among its main findings are that there is still a low perception of risk and misconceptions about transmission and therefore a need to reinforce preventive measures.

UNICEF's awareness-raising activities on COVID-19 prevention and vaccination reached 761,891 people through various communication channels and community engagement. The U-Report platform was launched in December 2022 and will be a valuable tool to support UNICEF's humanitarian response implementation. The distance education programme "La Escuela en Mi Casa" continued to roll-out through TV and radio, even when schools reopened, as a supplementary learning opportunity for preschool and primary school students. The Learning Passport was also approved as a national digital learning platform to be implemented in 2023. About 100 survivors (children and youth) of sexual violence or exploitation received support from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality using the care mechanisms for reporting violence.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

#### Health

UNICEF continued reinforcing continuity of essential health services during COVID-19 through the intensification of routine vaccination, reaching 15,676 children with Penta3 out of the 16,825 initially targeted in 2022 by the EPI programme with vaccination coverage of 70 per cent, higher than 68 per cent of 2021. During 2022, the country did not register vaccine stock-outs. As part of the post COVID-19 response plan, with UNICEF support, the Ministry of Health (MoH) developed a framework to coordinate with partners and a joint work plan, which all partners supporting the MoH have been involved in.

#### **Nutrition**

A total of 12,644 vitamin A capsules acquired by UNICEF were administered to children aged 6-11 months with a coverage rate of 28 per cent of 44,868 doses targeted in 2022. This coverage is even lower for children aged 12-59 months; only 5,436 doses have been administered out of the 219,0808 expected doses, due to the failure to implement convergent strategies to reach children in communities and preschools. Breastfeeding remains a major challenge in Equatorial Guinea. Therefore MoH, with the support of UNICEF, continues to implement community and health facility interventions to promote exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months. On World Breastfeeding Week, UNICEF supported the MoH to develop working sessions with 380 community leaders (Counsellors of the Ministry of Social Affairs) in five districts and have sensitized 180 mothers on breastfeeding practices and benefits.

#### **Child Protection**

UNICEF has contributed technically to the elaboration of a national protocol for the prevention of gender-based violence and PSEA with governmental partners, the United Nations system and CSOs. The protocol is designed to guide the action and care of cases of victims of violence and strengthen intersectoral coordination, a tool for the social, judicial and health sectors. Some 100 people, including adolescents and young victims of violence or sexual exploitation, used the support mechanisms of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality. In each district there is a social affairs delegate in turn with three assistants to respond to cases. Of these, 78 were cases of violence or sexual abuse in which there was coordination between the health, judicial and social affairs sectors. UNICEF experienced financial constraints in continuing to implement the pilot psychosocial programme launched in the wake of the 2021 Bata explosions.

#### **Education**

The distance education programme "La Escuela en Mi Casa" continued to roll-out through TV and radio, even after school reopening. More than 120 television and 48 radio sessions have been produced throughout the year to support the learning process of preschool and primary students (as a supplementary learning opportunity to tackle learning loss) and also as an alternative learning pathway for those who remain out of school. During May and June 2022, the Ministry of Education, with the support of UNICEF, carried out a survey on the levels of attendance, participation, satisfaction and perception of the "Escuela en Mi Casa" programme. Of the 917 primary students, 104 family members and 57 teachers who participated in the survey, 87 per cent of students believe they have learned through the programme. Similarly, 73 per cent of parents and caregivers believe that their children have been able to learn through the programme while 74 per cent of teachers agree.

Another major achievement of 2022 was the acceptance and approval of the government to design and implement the Learning Passport as a national digital learning platform. Digital education will enable the government to be better prepared for future shocks or emergencies as it will facilitate the teaching-learning process by helping students to continue their learning. Therefore, UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and GITGE (the national telecommunication infrastructure provider) have committed to joint investment efforts in digital education aimed to improve digital education through five key pillars: (1) teaching and learning solutions; (2) connectivity in schools; (3) digital devices; (4) accessible content and data; and 5) participation and engagement of young people, including families. The design and development of the Learning Passport for Equatorial Guinea will begin in early 2023.

#### WASH

Since the beginning of the pandemic in Equatorial Guinea, UNICEF has been collaborating with USAID in the establishment of an infection prevention and control programme. Within the framework of the USAID-funded project, UNICEF has supported the ministries of Education and Health in the provision of hygiene products for schools and health centres. A total of 10,103 bottles/litres of bleach and 46,976 units of soap have been distributed in 30 selected schools and health facilities in Malabo and Bata, in which ten focal points were trained. These facilities implemented IPC/WASH protocols which benefited 15,584 people throughout the year.

#### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

A total of 50,308 patients and 15,584 students benefited from 17,985 communication pieces in different formats to prevent COVID-19. During the reporting period, UNICEF developed a communication strategy and its corresponding operational plan with the production of printed, audio-visual and social media material (Facebook and Twitter)<sup>2</sup> based on the findings of the KAP survey. Within this strategy, UNICEF produced and disseminated 10 posts and images for social media; 18 radio spots for adolescents and adults (three in Spanish and 15 in local languages), and three videos with translation into sign languages. In addition, UNICEF designed two educative and informative brochures on COVID-19 preventive measures; one for adolescents and other for adults.

In coordination with the ministries of Health, Education and Information, UNICEF reached a total of 15,484 people through Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) sessions conducted on measures to prevent COVID-19 in targeted health and education facilities, and on the importance of being vaccinated with two doses among the health personnel participating in the project. The media recorded some IEC sessions in schools and health facilities, reaching an estimate of 143,608 people through television and 104,000 through radio.

UNICEF has been advocating for the implementation of U-Report in the country since 2019. In November 2022, the government gave UNICEF the green light to launch the project. During the month of December 2022, a steering committee was established, and U-Report was launched. With the availability of U-Report, UNICEF and the government will be able to reinforce emergency response actions such as dissemination of key information to vulnerable groups and data collection.

## Human Interest Stories and External Media

Links to UNICEF social networks posts: Covid-19 https://fb.watch/gO86LNhxtW/ https://fb.watch/gO8g98JoMb/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19GLZbQe99-SkNtGUsgI1Fvn8Kx-WHfjL?usp=sharing

https://fb.watch/gO8r0QeYxw/ https://fb.watch/gO8rMy6gI3/ https://www.facebook.com/UNICEFGuineaEcu/posts/pfbid02u4GfGVoJ9sK5pQXTm94b3yCBTiAtsCa2cieNvAhn4i5Xd 8dEW23PT8PCvW1N4Nt5I https://twitter.com/UNICEFGuineaEcu/status/1590687892963483648?t=EBUfeVWT1CIZ6ng7eTg-MA&s=08 https://www.instagram.com/p/CggwQcxOCmJ/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y= https://twitter.com/UNICEFGuineaEcu/status/1600141487177494530 https://twitter.com/UNICEFGuineaEcu/status/1601245416863191040?t=jYA08n X7gB0ObXh0FOIiQ&s=19 https://www.unicef.org/eguatorialguinea/comunicados-prensa/la-asesora-regional-de-usaidbha-susan-bergson-visitaguinea-ecuatorial https://www.unicef.org/equatorialguinea/comunicados-prensa/unicef-realiza-la-encuesta-r%C3%A1pida-cap-ii-deevaluaci%C3%B3n-sobre-la-covid-19-en Dia Mundial del Niño: https://www.unicef.org/equatorialguinea/comunicados-prensa/celebraci%C3%B3n-del-d%C3%ADa-mundial-de-lainfancia-0 Lactancia Materna: https://www.unicef.org/eguatorialguinea/historias/mitos-y-verdades-sobre-la-lactancia-materna **U-Report:** https://www.unicef.org/equatorialguinea/comunicados-prensa/reuni%C3%B3n-del-comit%C3%A9-de-pilotaje-para-lapuesta-en-marcha-del-proyecto-de

### Ghana

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

In 2022 Ghana experienced humanitarian needs as a result of popopulation displacement from Burkina Faso, health emergencies especially disease outbreaks (yellow fever, mpox, polio and Marburg virus), tidal waves on the south eastern coast, and floods in the north and south of the country. The Sahel conflict spillover into Ghana continues to be a threat, exacerbated by the porous borders in the north. In 2022, over 2,000 persons were recorded as having crossed over to flee conflict in Burkina Faso putting additional pressure on scare resources of host communities in the Upper East Region of Ghana and basic social service availability. Real numbers could be higher because not all persons could be tracked.

Due to a slowdown in the COVID-19 vaccination rates, a national catch up campaign was launched. A national campaign was also conducted to respond to a polio outbreak with the virus found in both human and environmental samples. Other health emergencies, which were rapidly contained, were Marburg virus and mpox outbreaks. A yellow fever outbreak in unimmunised nomadic population in the northern part of Ghana required a coordinated government response which UNICEF actively supported. The National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO), a coordinating agency, currently faces challenges to respond to emergencies and there are concerns with the capacity of other state actors preparedness for emergency as revealed by the CADRI diagnostic mission to Ghana in 2022.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

#### Health

Ghana recorded 171,008 cummulative cases of COVID-19 with 1,461 deaths and 23 active cases at the end of the year. UNICEF supported the strengthening of immunization systems and increasing access to life saving vaccines. Polio nOPV2 campaigns reached about 6.3 million children aged 0 to 5 years. UNICEF funded and supported the fifth national COVID-19 vaccination days campaign, the last campaign for 2022, which reached 1.7 million people across all the 261 districts in the country. UNICEF also supported the Ghana Health Service to improve the resilience of health systems across 15 communities in four districts of two regions at risk of spillover from the conflict in the Central Sahel. The two regions have been supported to develop and revise emergency preparedness and response plans and to build capacity at ports of entry to prevent disease spread. UNICEF supported the Ghana Health Service to conduct two rounds of reactive vaccination, in 32 and 43 sub-districts respectively, reaching 1,074,467 persons with life-saving vaccines. Additionally, 2,123 community-based surveillance volunteers were trained to help improve community-based surveillance and reporting.

UNICEF also supported a study on the uptake of immunization services among nomadic and pastoral communities to provide key insights for programming to leave no one behind. Between 28 June and 16 September 2022, the Ministry of Health of Ghana reported three confirmed cases of Marburg Virus Disease (MVD) including two deaths (CFR 67 per cent). UNICEF supported the Marburg virus response through provision of category 3 personal protective devices and provided technical assistance through the "Integrated Outbreak Analytics" team for outbreak investigation. The 2022 mpox outbreak in Ghana was a part of the larger outbreak of human mpox, though unlike some neighbouring countries, Ghana had no endemic presence of mpox. A total of 84 confirmed cases and 5 deaths were recorded in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2022.

#### **Nutrition**

UNICEF continued to provide both technical and financial support to the Government to implement nutrition interventions. To ensure continuous delivery of essential nutrition services in the context of COVID-19 and the Sahel spill over, UNICEF through funding from Governments of Canada and Japan, procured essential nutrition supplies including therapeutic foods and milks (RUTF, F-75 & F-100), ReSoMal, Micronutrient Powders (MNPs) and anthropometric equipment (weighing scales, infantometers, mid-upper circumference tapes) for the prevention, early detection, and treatment of malnutrition. In the period under review, 11,236 children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) were admitted, of whom 7,384 (73 per cent) were successfully treated (cured) and discharged. Also, 370,038 caregivers of children 0-23 months received counselling on optimal Infant and Young Child Feeding practices while 831,274 pregnant women and 2.5 million adolescent girls received Iron and Folic Acid supplements. Additionally, 2,516 health workers in Ashanti Region also received training on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, Infant and Young Child Feeding, and preventative methods for COVID-19.

#### **Child Protection**

In 2022, UNICEF supported the Government in scaling up the Integrated Social Service (ISS) from 100 to 160 districts out of 261 districts in Ghana, which resulted in bringing decentralized social protection, child protection and health services together to deliver comprehensive case management and access to social services for more than 100,000 vulnerable children. COVID-19 and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) messages were integrated into the Child Protection Community Facilitation Toolkits, reaching a total of 1,688,278 people, including 76,068 children (41,655 girls) through community-based reflective dialogue. To strengthen internal capacity, UNICEF organized a Child Protection in Emergency (CPiE) training for key UNICEF personnel in Accra and Tamale on the Core Commitment for Children (CCC) and the Child Protection Minimum Standards and develop the Child Protection Emergency Preparedness Plan for the Sahel Crisis. Based on this, a joint child protection/education in emergency programme was developed, with Tamale Office and the Regional office. Through UNICEF's advocacy, the Government-led National Child Protection Committee (NCPC) agreed to create a working group on CPiE. The terms of reference is under development with UNICEF support.

#### **Education**

To ensure Ghana's education system is adequately prepared to effectively respond to emergencies and build a resilient system, over 60 multi-sectoral stakeholders were mobilized to review, validate, and finalize the Education Sector's Emergency contingency plan. UNICEF provided education supplies and stationery benefiting 373 internally displaced persons at camps and advanced interventions to ensure schools are aware and prepared to respond to any spillover effects of the Central Sahel crisis. A total of 973 education officials, teachers/headteachers within 143 schools in 15 atrisk communities of the Sahel spillover in four districts received capacity building support on school level emergency planning, peace building and other areas. Additionally, UNICEF strengthened over 143 peace clubs, engaged 15,096 (5,025 female) students, and reached 53,296 community members on resilience and social cohesion. UNICEF supported the orientation of 2,000 education officials across the 260 districts on education in emergencies (EiE), contributing to all 260 districts integrating EiE indicators into their district plans. UNICEF supported the expansion of the radio learning programme to reach learners across all the 16 regions with 1,050 lessons and continues to use the radio platform to disseminate messages on COVID-19 safety protocols, back-to-school, etc.

#### WASH

To improve hygiene practices, UNICEF supported WASH improvement in schools, health care facilities and public places. Infrastructure suppor, has improved hygiene and infection prevention and control to over 100 outpatients per day. WASH services in healthcare facilities were monitored through improved WASH indicators in the District Health Information Management System. UNICEF delivered on the construction of WASH facilities in 55 health care facilities and 20 schools relating to improving services in areas most affected by the COVID-19 crisis. To respond to additional

humanitarian needs from the Sahel conflict, UNICEF conducted rapid technical assessments of border districts in the Upper East Region in order to improve water supply systems in communities likely to have increased influx of families displaced by armed conflict in Burkina Faso. A stakeholder assessment was carried out in the north to determine actors to engage to foster partnerships to respond to Sahel spillover humanitarian work. Non-COVID-19 support to schools has provided improved WASH services to 1,173 school children, including 794 girls.

### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

With funding support from the Embassy of Denmark and Global Affairs Canada, UNICEF supported the Ashanti region to organise School Quiz competition for health clubs in 16 schools to crown the efforts of Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) activities on WASH for resilience on COVID-19 as well as prevention of other diseases. 25,000 children were directly involved on the activity, learned proper handwashing and got information on WASH related disease, prevention and treatment. These pieces of information and knowledge formed part of the Quiz competition. A preparedness response on RCCE activity plan for Marburg Virus Disease (MVD) was rolled out till December 2022 which reached 6 million people in the affected districts. Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) planning and orientation of partners and field monitors for both the nOPV2 Campaign and Sahel spill over crisis were undertaken for more than 100 implementers and supervisors at the national and regional levels. These were Government, CSOs and media partners who led the social mobilization, field monitoring of the vaccine administration and accountability process for the campaigns. The nOPV2 social mobilization activities are expected to create at least 80 per cent awareness for participating populations while the Sahel crisis SBC preparedness activities is expected to create at wareness on safety, security, availability of essential services and utilization for the over 1 million people.

UNICEF is supporting the SDD University for Business and Integrated Development Studies on community research to map some of the socio-cultural issues in these communities.

UNICEF is using U-Report and Chatbot to enhance messaging for building resilience for emergencies among young people in Ghana. Finally, UNICEF gave technical support to the Foods and Drugs Authority (FDA) in the establishment of a social listening group at the sub-national level, made up of 25 personnel from the FDA to help track Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI) and monitor misinformation and vaccine hesitancy at the district level.

### **Social Protection**

UNICEF supported the Government to improve efficiency and facilitate linkages to services and to strengthen the social protection sector's policy and legal framework. UNICEF continued to provide hands-on technical support to the government's social protection response in areas critical to children and families' by expanding the Integrated Social Services initiative from 100 Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to 160 in 2022 with key programme operational guidance documents reviewed. 83,415 new Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) beneficiaries have been enrolled onto the NHIS with 17,502 beneficiary cards replaced under the ISS programme. Sustained advocacy for the increment of the LEAP grant value has resulted in a proposal in the 2023 national budget to double the grant from the current average of GH¢45 per month to GH¢90. The COVID-19 relief cash transfer has reached additional 53,151 beneficiaries bringing total coverage to 107,574 since 2020.

#### **PSEA**

To strengthen Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), including in communities affected by the Sahel crisis, UNICEF Ghana served as PSEA Coordinator to the UN PSEA network in Ghana and supported the implementation of the Ghana's UN PSEA Action Plan 2022 and the update of the Action Plan for 2023. UNICEF Ghana provided technical and coordination support for the inter-agency capacity building training for the UN PSEA Network in Ghana in October 2022. PSEA was mainstreamed into the core child protection and SBC programmes, reaching more than 1.8 million people. PSEA training was also integrated to the child protection training curriculum, reaching about 350 social service workforce in 60 districts in 2022.

### **Guinea-Bissau**

### Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Official COVID-19 situation reports for Guinea-Bissau were stopped in July 2022 when the mandate of the High Commission for COVID-19 was brought to an end. As of end of July 2022, the country had recorded 8,400 cumulative cases out of 145,231 tested representing a positivity index of 5.7 per cent. The latest report on COVID-19 vaccination from the Ministry of Health indicates that 315,050 people have now been reached and are fully vaccinated, representing 26 per cent of the eligible population.



## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

#### Health

During the second half of the year, the Ministry of Health decided on the establishment of permanent COVID-19 vaccination posts in some healthcare facilities to ensure continuous vaccination in between campaigns. A UNICEF-supported vaccination campaign planned for the fourth quarter of 2022 was postponed to 2023 due to labour disputes between the Ministry of Health and health workers, which led to strikes.

#### **Education**

In September 2022, a distribution of hygiene supplies was undertaken to ensure that 319 schools start the school year with the minimum package for a safe return to school. This distribution reached 104,002 children and adolescents with soap, portable group handwashing stations and chlorine for water treatment. COVID-19 prevention messages as well as safe hygiene practices were shared with teachers and students.

#### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

The visit of the Global Lead Coordinator for COVID-19 Vaccine Country-Readiness and Delivery to Guinea-Bissau in mid-July 2022 drew commitment from national authorities and development partners following organised meetings with high-level government officials, media interactions and field visits, which placed the need for improvements to COVID-19 vaccinations on the national agenda. COVID-19 outreach posts reached over 58,000 people and proved to be an effective way to spread COVID-19 sensitization messaging, focusing on the importance of vaccination. During the second semester of 2022, UNICEF mobilized 238 traditional and religious leaders, 200 healers, 1,970 village chiefs, and 28 traditional medias for the Forums of



Traditional Leaders on COVID-19 held in all regions of the countries to raise awareness and promote adherence to COVID-19 vaccination.

### Human Interest Stories and External Media PRESS RELEASES Global Lead Coordinator for COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Partnership France vaccine donation Japan joins hands with UNICEF to strengthen vaccine cold chain system in Guinea-Bissau Executive Director Catherine Russell: International Women's Day, Girls in COVID-19 recovery Republic of Korea vaccines donation to Guinea-Bissau



#### **MEDIA ARTICLES**

UNICEF Guinea-Bissau dedicated webpage for coronavirus content in Portuguese: <u>https://www.unicef.org/guineabissau/pt/coronavirus-na-guine-bissau</u>

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

UNICEF Guinea-Bissau social media pages: <u>Facebook</u>, <u>Twitter</u>, <u>YouTube</u> and <u>www.unicef.org/guineabissau</u>

### Liberia

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The year 2022 began with an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases, albeit with lower mortality rates than in previous years. By the end of 2022, Liberia had recorded a total of 8,053 confirmed cases with 1,309 recorded in 2022 and a total of 294 deaths, giving a case fatality of 3.65 per cent (compared to 4.25 per cent in 2021). UNICEF continued to support government implementation of its National COVID-19 Response Plan. As of the end of 2022, 3,255,863 adults, or 78 per cent of the total population, were fully vaccinated against COVID-19. UNICEF supported the launch of vaccination on 1 April 2021 with the arrival of 96,000 doses of Astra Zeneca vaccines and our support continued into 2022 with the reception of Johnson and Johnson, Pfizer adult and Pfizer paediatric doses.

UNICEF continued to support customs clearance and in country logistics and RCCE activities. In addition, UNICEF ensured at least 602,273 children returned to school by ensuring safe school protocols as well as school health supplies were provided. The capacity of school personnel to ensure compliance was strengthened.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

#### Health

UNICEF collaborated with other UN agencies to provide coordinated support that allowed Liberia to become the first country in the West African Region to reach the set target of 70 per cent of the intended population to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. UNICEF procured and supplied 3,268 gallons of fuel for five south-eastern county vaccine stores to support safe storage and transportation of vaccines. Continuous support was provided for the maintenance and expansion of the cold chain system by 39 per cent with the procurement and installation of 245 solar refrigerators installed at 245 health facilities and deployment of 17 refrigerators, 19 freezers, 445 cold boxes and 950 vaccine carriers to county vaccine depots. Direct operational support was provided to seven of the of the fifteen counties for the provision of essential health care services reaching at total of 2,083,447 persons. UNICEF has commenced plans with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health for the roll out of paediatric Pfizer vaccines in schools during 2023. In partnership with US CDC and the University of Oslo, UNICEF has been engaging on the integration of COVID-19 database into the DHIS 2 platform and integrating COVID-19 vaccination into routine immunization services.

To strengthen the oxygen delivery system in the country, UNICEF procured one Pressure Swing Absorptive (PSA) plant. A contractor is currently constructing the shelter to house the PSA plant, refilled available 4,500 oxygen cylinders, provided capacity building for 17 biomedical technicians on equipment installation, repairs and maintenance as well as the development and launch of the National Policy on Medical Oxygen and clinical guidelines.

Measles outbreaks were recorded in 93 per cent of the counties and UNICEF supported the vaccination of 406,540 children 9-53 months (122,961 in phase 1 and 283,579 in phase 2).

Training was conducted for 540 community health assistants (CHAs) to improve their capacity for responding to disease outbreaks in schools and health facilities, and defaulter tracking of children under two years of age. 15 UN volunteers were also engaged in working with County Health Teams to increase the demand for COVID-19 updates.

#### **Nutrition**

UNICEF in coordination with partners is supporting the Government of Liberia to implement nutrition interventions in 514 public health facilities and across communities in the 15 counties. As of November 2022, a total of 23,496 children (12,505 girls and 10,909 boys) aged 6-59 months with SAM were treated, compared to a target of 29,953 (78 per cent). The recovery rate was 78 per cent and death rate 2 per cent, in line with SPHERE standards, though defaulter (19 per cent) and non-responders (1 per cent) rates were high due to frequent stockout of therapeutic products during the year.

Additionally, a total of 502,316 pregnant women and caregivers were reached with maternal services and infant and young child feeding (IYCF) and caring practices against the target of 208,790 while 130,503 pregnant women received iron folic acid (IFA) supplementation against the target of 148,789 (88 per cent of target).

The counselling messages were focused on early initiation of breastfeeding in the first hour of life, exclusive breastfeeding for up to six months, timely introduction of complementary feeding at six months, promotion of the use of local food from the different food groups, and women's nutrition. A total of 66,645 adolescent girls (10-19 years) received weekly IFA supplementation, health education, and counselling against the target of 127,107 (52 per cent), and 41,718 girls received deworming tablets against the target of 186,027 (22 per cent) while 164,743 children 6-23 months received micronutrient powers (MNP) supplementation against a target of 192,765 (85 per cent) and 144, 307 of children 6-59 months received vitamin A supplementation (VAS), against the target of 317,068 (46 per cent).

UNICEF is supporting the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Health to implement activities that improve demand and uptake of nutrition services through the community structures such as Mother Support Groups (MSGs), health clubs in schools, and CHA to enhance community engagement, participation, awareness, and involvement for service demand generation and utilization of services. The programme is also supporting the Government of Liberia to improve the complementary feeding practices of young children (6-23 months) through the implementation of an integrated approach including delivery of quality counselling on Infant and Young Child feeding (IYCF) and caring practices, MNPs for home fortification of complementary foods together with testing UNICEF's latest innovation- the Complementary Feeding Bowl, in Margibi County. Engagement meetings are ongoing, and the activity is expected to start in January 2023. UNICEF also provided support to the Government of Liberia for the continuity of nutrition supplies and services to the most vulnerable women and children in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 10,000 cartons of RUTF, 75 cartons of F-100, 100 cartons of F-75,30,000 packs of MNP, 140,748 packs of Iron Folic Acid, and 7,350 packs of mebendazole were procured.

UNICEF worked jointly with WFP, FAO and WHO to support the Government of Liberia with the leadership of the Minster of Health and Minister of Agriculture, to conduct a nationwide Rapid Food Security, Livelihood, Nutrition, and Market Assessment (RFSLNA) to assess the impact of COVID-19 and the economic/food prices shock on the agricultural production, rural livelihoods, food security and nutritional status of households and communities. Preliminary results from the RFSLNA show that Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) prevalence by Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurement is 7.1 per cent, SAM is 2.5 per cent while the national prevalence of Food Insecurity stands at 47 per cent. An emergency response plan is being drafted to address the country's "alert/stress level of acute malnutrition, while routine nutrition services are provided.

#### **Child Protection**

In partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, UNICEF reached over 377 people with Mental Health Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS). Of the 377 persons reached, a total of 276 children including COVID-19 affected children received MHPSS. UNICEF also supported the Government to ensure the continuation and accessibility of essential child protection services during the COVID-19 pandemic by alternative care support to 136 children (81 boys and 55 girls), separated, trafficked, abandoned, or with special needs. A total of 74 children (49 girls and 25 boys) out of the 136 children were reunified with their parents, while the remaining 62 children are awaiting reunification with their parents after a proper assessment. In addition, 4,644 children (2,787 girls and 1,857 boys) who had experienced violence were reached by health, social work, or justice/law enforcement services received individual case management services.

Gender-based violence (GBV) response services were provided to 1,155 children (1,075 girls and 80 boys), while a total of 1,035 women and children also benefited from GBV risk mitigation interventions.

A total of 100 peer educators and 310 other members of community-based child protection structures such as the Child Welfare Committees, and Parents Teachers Associations have been trained to prevent COVID-19 and provided logistical support. As a result of the support, UNICEF through its Child Protection Programme has reached at least 2,025 persons (770 women, 235 men, 760 girls, and 260 boys) with messaging on COVID-19 prevention, control and response.

#### **Education**

In the reporting period, UNICEF has continued to provide support to the government to ensure that schools remain open for children. Following the distribution of hygiene kits in all schools the previous year to mitigate the effects of COVID-19, school grants were provided for the renovation of segregated WASH facilities in 200 most vulnerable and at-risk schools for approximately 100,000 children. Additionally, school development grants and related training to teachers and headteachers were provided to these schools to support holistic school development planning, management/supervision, and WASH facility maintenance. Cumulatively, UNICEF has supported continuity of access and learning of impacted children through the provision of safe spaces, in all 6,246 schools including 2,645 public and 3,601 private schools in the 15 counties in Liberia. This was accomplished through the provision of psychosocial support, adjusting classroom management, and lesson delivery in compliance with the COVID-19 precautionary measures. In all, 515,173 children (268,151 boys and 247,022 girls) were supported with learning, with 176,518 children (82,250 males and 94,265 females) in pre-primary/early learning and 251,460 children (137,685 boys and 113,873 girls) in lower secondary. At least 555,000 children (11,690 of whom are girls) received individual learning materials. A total of 16,000 adolescents aged 10-14 (4,258 boys and 6,382 girls) were accessing skills development programmes. Towards skills and learning, the 6,428 teachers trained not only received basic teaching skills in child centred pedagogy but also critical skills for children in crisis including health and child protection with a focus on psychosocial support. The opportunity was utilised to provide much-needed information on the new surge of the COVID-19 pandemic to a target group that would not otherwise receive such streamlined information.

With respect to building resilience and systems strengthening, the EiE Group established at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to operate. Following in the footsteps of the Rapid Appraisal Report on the effects of COVID-19 on the education sector, especially across schools, conducted in early 2021 and officially adopted by the EiE Working Group, the MOE has commenced the establishment of "real-time" school-based information management systems in schools commencing with 200 model schools. The mobilisation and orientation of schools/communities have continued reaching 10,800 community leaders and school personnel with a focus on addressing the non-returns and establishment of a dedicated radio learning platform. 9,000 lessons have been developed for airing the curriculum as part of a learning continuity strategy which also reached the hard-to-reach children via remote and home-based learning.

#### WASH

The WASH facilities, including water kiosks, hand-dug wells, and latrines, constructed with funds from Iceland in the last year in six fishing communities in three counties (Montserrado, Cape Mount, and Margibi) benefited more than 23,000 persons, were monitored during the period, and minor operation and maintenance (O&M) support provided. Seven mechanical boreholes were drilled in Grandcess fishing communities and three were fitted with handpumps and placed in service. Construction works of additional WASH facilities in Grandcess, including a small water system, water kiosks, latrines, hand-dug wells, and fish wash basins are ongoing.

WASH facilities construction and rehabilitation works were completed at eight schools in Montserrado County and are ongoing at 12 schools in Gbarpolu and Grand Cape Mount counties through the Ministry of Public Works. WASH facilities rehabilitation at 200 schools is also ongoing through the Ministry of Education with funding from UNICEF and is being monitored in 12 counties by county WASH staff of the Ministry of Public Works.

WASH facilities construction and rehabilitation works are ongoing at four health care facilities (HCFs) in Grand Kru County, which include the Barclayville Health Centre, Buah Health Centre, Nyankunpo Clinic and Genoyah Clinic. The activities include the construction and rehabilitation of toilets, water wells (hand-dug and boreholes), incinerators, ash pits, placenta pits, and water towers. Solar-operated submersible pumps will be installed in boreholes at 2 HCFs.

Three mechanized small water supply systems (SWS) have been rehabilitated in three communities in Ganta city, and rehabilitation works are ongoing at another two SWS in Pleebo City.

UNICEF is working with the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) to conduct Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) training for county and district staff in the six counties – Grand Kru, Maryland, River Gee, Grand Gedeh, Grand Cape Mount, and Gbarpolu. A total of 280 persons have thus far been trained in four counties. This was the result of the roll-out of the Liberia Ending Open Defecation Roadmap – 2025 launched on 19 November 2021, and the national workshop on the "Comprehensive and Harmonized Action to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (CHATWASH) Movement" in Liberia held in March 2022. CHATWASH is a new concept introduced to accelerate the improved delivery of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene services across the country.

Emergency WASH supplies were procured by UNICEF and distributed to 2,400 refugee families through UNHCR in three camps in Nimba (Saclepea Refugee Camp), Grand Gedeh (PTP Refugee Camp), and Maryland (Little Wlebo Refugee Camp).

#### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

UNICEF is providing sustained technical and financial support to national and sub-national COVID-19 response coordination bodies (RCCE Pillar) to ensure they are empowered to respond to the ongoing emergency outbreaks, as well as develop, print, and disseminate nationwide more than 600,000 copies of IEC/BCC materials and coordinate social behaviour change actions.

Approximately 1,967,944 people had access to preventive lifesaving information and messages on COVID-19 and access to routine health services because of the implementation of UNICEF-supported SBC Activities. UNICEF continues to focus on ensuring that affected populations have access to life-saving information to enhance their knowledge and skills and foster the adaptation of positive behaviors (handwashing, social distancing, wearing of masks, etc.).

To ensure sustained engagement, UNICEF has engaged 15 United Nations Volunteers (UNVs). These UNVs enhanced community engagement activities and programme coordination at the community level. The UNVs were recruited, assigned to the 15 counties, embedded in the County Health Team, and served as a representative of UNICEF to improve our field presence. UNVs engaged 66,994 persons, 340 religious leaders, and 453 local authorities through community meetings. This engagement has helped strengthen the community feedback mechanism; it allows the communities' concerns to be addressed and questions answered.

UNICEF continues to support social mobilization and community engagement efforts through a total of 1,300,200 visits by Community Health Volunteers during which 583,583 caregivers and households are empowered with the knowledge to take positive action related to immunization, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence through consistent communications for development actions.

#### **Supply and Logistics**

UNICEF, supported by the Government of the People's Republic of China, procured supplies worth US\$ 910,250 and distributed them to public health facilities in three counties and therapeutic nutrition supplements in all 15 counties. With support from the Government of Japan, the essential and emergency supplies including cold chain equipment such as SDD Solar refrigerators were procured and received in Monrovia and the installation, commissioning, and training will take place first quarter 2022. Orders have been placed for oxygen therapeutics, cold boxes, and health and nutrition supplies that are expected to be delivered in the first quarter 2022. The oxygen plant is expected to arrive in Monrovia first quarter of 2022 and will be installed at the CB Dunbar Hospital in Bong County. Site preparation is ongoing.

## Human Interest Stories and External Media



Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram continued to be the three main online platforms utilized for disseminating information and creating awareness of COVID-19. Radio and traditional media were utilized with a focus on supporting SBC interventions.

Additionally, the country office has been providing technical support to the MoH and its different units on the best means to create awareness and disseminate updates regarding COVID-19. Close cooperation with donor countries has taken place on the arrival of vaccines in alignment with the different protocols.

### Senegal

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

UNICEF continues to provide humanitarian support to affected children and families in Senegal, and support the government's efforts to tackle COVID-19, including through vaccination. Around 2 million people have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, which represents 24 per cent of over 18 years olds, but less than 10 per cent of the general population.

UNICEF also contributes to building resilience in nutrition through preventive and curative activities for acute malnutrition. In collaboration with the National Hygiene Service, UNICEF supported the infection prevention and control response by training hygiene workers, distributing supplies, and providing information on COVID-19 prevention.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

#### Health

Immunization rates against COVID-19 in Senegal remained low and stagnating, despite the greater availability of vaccines and commitment of COVAX partners. UNICEF supported accelerating vaccination plans for about five regions. In addition, UNICEF supported the improvement of cold chain through the procurement of five ultra-cold-chain facilities (UCCs) to store Pfizer vaccines, and 277 electric refrigerators for health facilities and 35 solar refrigerators for rural health facilities. UNICEF also supported the procurement of 178 cold boxes and about 3,000 vaccines carriers during the second-round polio campaign in January 2022. Technical and financial assistance are ongoing to rehabilitate the national central warehouse and six regional vaccine stores in order to improve vaccine storage and management. Wastage management remains challenging.

#### **Nutrition**

UNICEF continues to support the government in the prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition. Resilience building strategies continue to be implemented in the context of COVID-19. At end of 2022:

- 1,432,841 children received two doses of vitamin A
- 21,923 children were admitted for SAM treatment
- 452 qualified health workers were trained in Severe Acute Malnutrition in seven regions
- 80 granary food stores were set up in Kolda Kedougou and Tambacounda in order to improve dietary diversity in children
- Technical assistance provided with seven nutrition resource persons placed in the five most vulnerable regions and two at central level of the Ministry of Health.

#### **Child Protection**

In the absence of resources to fund child protection activities planned in the annual humanitarian action for children (HAC) appeal, few actions have been implemented during the second half of 2022. Support has been provided to keep strengthening the capacity of UNICEF's partners in preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Based on the action plans developed with the accompaniment of UNICEF, civil society partners such as the Senegalese Red Cross succeeded in reducing their SEA risk level. These efforts will continue to contribute to establishing safe channels for reporting sexual exploitation and abuse.

In addition, even though the activities were not implemented in the framework of HAC, UNICEF has been providing support to national partners to make services available to child victims of violence. In 2022, 1,264 girl and 1,572 boy survivors of violence have accessed to health, legal and/or psychosocial support services. However, these results were not achieved in an emergency or humanitarian response context.

#### **Education**

In 2022, UNICEF's support to the implementation of the COVID-19 Education Sector Response Plan has facilitated the upgrading of 419 pre-primary schools and early childhood education centres, which have received essential hygiene supplies to meet requirements from school health protocols, benefiting 26,862 children (including 14,774 girls).

UNICEF also supported the Government's response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (which increased dropout rates and reduced enrolment rates) through the implementation of accelerated learning and catch-up interventions for out-of-school children of primary and lower secondary school age, extending learning opportunities to 14,191 children (including 7,699 girls). A total of 217,091 children received individual learning materials with UNICEF support, including 202,900 schoolgirls enrolled in 4,058 public schools who received menstrual hygiene management (MHM) kits and MHM education to support their retention at school.

#### WASH

UNICEF supported the following key WASH activities:

- Training of 136 hygiene and health workers and 354 community volunteers (75 per cent of whom are women) on IPC.
- Establishment of 1,716 public hand-washing stations in health facilities and other public establishments.
- Supply of 17,309 hygiene kits to households affected by COVID-19.
- Disinfection of 14,494 houses, 2,293 schools and "daaras", and 1,983 other public places.
- Information of 1,017,326 people (579,876 women and 437,450 men) on COVID-19 prevention measures,

- Donation of 1,706 hygiene kits to 9,678 affected families, 625 displaced families and 3,792 displaced persons, to prevent the risks of diseases related to water, hygiene and sanitation during floods.

#### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

UNICEF continues to support governmental partners and social organizations in their efforts to revive vaccination in order to avoid possible waves of contamination. The interventions during this first semester are a mixed supply and demand approach to boost immunization.

Partnerships with youth organizations have made it possible to reach the university community with dialogue and exchange sessions in order to reach a decision to be vaccinated, taking advantage of the proximity offer. Through a combination of traditional media, social networks and the use of cell phones, more than 1 million people received information on vaccination as the safest way to prevent infection, as well as on other barrier measures. As part of the relaunch of COVID-19 vaccination, UNICEF continued the partnership with VIAMO and mobile communication interventions were carried out. This includes the capacity building of 207 health workers of the Network on Vaccination against COVID-19 (ROCBAC); the realization of a communication campaign that reached 2,918 people; and two surveys of 3,513 people on community perceptions of COVID-19 vaccination in the 14 regions.

## Human Interest Stories and External Media

#### I got vaccinated not just for myself but for my family



"Like many, I have been watching the news about COVID-19 in Senegal and internationally and looking forward to a reprieve, which it seems will only come about with a vaccine" says Bourama Manka, 43, from the city of Marsassoum in Casamance, southern Senegal.

"Vaccines are a normal part of how I look after my health and the health of my kids. I understand that every medical intervention carries risk, but on balance, the benefits of vaccines far outweigh the risks for me and my family" he explained. <u>Read more</u>

UNICEF produced a dedicated COVID-19 response report to showcase the efforts made by UNICEF and its partners and acknowledge the support provided by USAID and other donors. This report, entitled

#### **MULTIMEDIA COVID-19:**

"<u>The race against COVID-19</u>: <u>Outpacing the pandemic for children in Senegal</u>" was widely disseminated among partners, both nationally and globally. Digital version available <u>here</u>. Representative's statement: <u>Today marks two years</u> <u>since Senegal's first case of COVID-19</u> How did COVID-19 impact children in Senegal? Rep's intro

### Sierra Leone

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

In 2022, UNICEF assisted crisis-affected people with essential emergency items, financial and technical support for flood mitigation, disaster preparedness and emergency response. UNICEF supported the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) and relevant line ministries for the August and December 2022 floods and urban fire responses affecting over 2,000 families in Freetown, especially in the WASH, Child Protection, Health/Nutrition and Social Behaviour Change (SBC) sectors. In August 2022, UNICEF facilitated the release and return of 24 children following the violent demonstrations in Freetown.

In coordination with WFP, UNDP, UNCT and OCHA Dakar, UNICEF organized a five-day disaster management training for 42 technical staff from NDMA and other line ministries, the national Red Cross Society and INGOs. UNICEF will continue to strengthen the capacity of the NDMA in 2023.

The rising inflation from 28.49 per cent in June to 43.62 per cent in November 2022 is severely impacting the food security of the most vulnerable populations in Sierra Leone. UNICEF is working with the UN Country Team and partners to monitor the situation.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

### Health

UNICEF supported the training of 1,500 health care workers for the effective roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccination programme across the country. As of 31 December 2022, a total of 3,546,051 people over the age of 12 have been fully vaccinated, achieving the WHO target of 70 per cent of targeted population. UNICEF in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) ensured the procurement and delivery of 5,362,530 vaccine doses, Personal Protective Equipment, and Infection Prevention and Control materials in support of the COVID-19 emergency response. Over 300 cold chain equipments were installed in health facilities, including in remote communities to improve the storage and uptake of vaccinations.

UNICEF collaborated with MoHS through District Health Management Teams to respond to a measles outbreak in some districts. Over 300 children were reached with measles-rubella vaccines during vaccination in affected communities. In addition, 1,500 health care workers nationwide were trained on effective waste management to ensure the proper, timely and effective management of health care waste.

#### **Nutrition**

UNICEF in collaboration with the MoHS, supported the delivery of critical nutrition services such as vitamin A supplementation (VAS) and treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in the humanitarian context. A total of 1,039,932 children 6-59 months received vitamin A supplements in Semester 1, 2022, while 956,867 children 6 - 59 months were reached with VAS services in Semester 2, 2022. From January to December 2022, 42,319 severely malnourished children aged 6–59 months (21,555 girls and 20,764 boys) were admitted in the 814 health facilities nationwide offering Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) services.

#### **Child Protection**

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Psychosocial Support Services Pillar, co-led by UNICEF, was able to provide timely and appropriate services to children and families affected by flooding in 11 districts and fire disasters in 9 out of the 16 districts in Sierra Leone. A total of 5,480 children (boys, 2761 and girls 2,719) was provided with case management support and protection services, including psychological first aid (PFA) and other community based psychosocial support services, as well as non-food items, including used clothing and school materials.

A total 15,600 adults (male 6,240, female 9,360) participated in GBV prevention interventions through various programmes such as radio discussions and community meetings. Phone-in radio discussion programmes were held on how to monitor, prevent and report GBV, reaching an estimated 31,000 people. Funding for child protection interventions remains limited; support from the Peacebuilding Fund will strengthen GBV case and information management.

#### **Education**

UNICEF continued to support the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) and the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE) to ensure learning continuity for all children, including for students affected by the fire incident in February 2022 at the Milton Margai School for the Blind in Freetown. UNICEF provided teaching and learning materials, including exercise books, pens, school bags, tape recorders, Stylus, Braille Papers, binding combs, and basic necessities such clothes, socks and shoes to 81 children (32 girls and 49 boys) resident at the boarding home. With support from UNICEF, 32 staff from the school were trained to provide psychosocial support to the affected children.

#### WASH

In 2022, UNICEF in collaboration with the NDMA and the WASH pillar responded to the flood and fire disasters in Sierra Leone. A total of 9,279 disaster-affected populations including 4,797 females and 4,482 males (1,879 households) were provided with lifesaving WASH items, including sufficient quantities of drinking water, plastic buckets and cups, soap, water purification tablets, etc. UNICEF also provided 50 tarpaulins for the construction of temporary latrines during the emergencies. Before the onset of the rainy season in May 2022, UNICEF supported NDMA with flood mitigation kits that included wheelbarrows, shovels, pickaxes, rakes, rubber boots, and heavy-duty gloves.

#### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

A total of 884,210 people in 10,433 communities were supported by 2,610 Community Led Action (CLA) mobilizers to design and implement action plans to improve COVID-19 vaccine acceptance. Activities led by community members reached 3.7 million people with messages on COVID-19 vaccination, with 30 and 24 per cent increases in COVID-19 vaccination in communities targeted in the first and second semesters of 2022. UNICEF supported the MoHS in embedding 1,385 mobilizers in surge vaccination teams and expanding access to information, production and airing of 510 one-hour radio programmes and 170 jingles on COVID-19 vaccination. A total of 168 stakeholders, including partners, CLA mobilizers and journalists were trained on the use of the Rumours, Misinformation and Concerns (RMC) reporting tools and dashboards. Risk Communication and Community Engagement interventions significantly contributed to reaching the country target of 70 per cent of eligible population fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

UNICEF also supported NDMA to start radio/TV programmes and to deploy 160 community volunteers in 20 affected and at-risk communities during the floods in Freetown.

### Human Interest Stories and External Media

#### Web updates

Community Led Action helps to improve COVID-19 vaccine coverage in Sierra Leone | UNICEF Sierra Leone Support towards effective COVID-19 Vaccine Roll out | UNICEF Sierra Leone With 98 per cent vaccination coverage, 3 communities lead the way in building resilience to COVID-19 | UNICEF Sierra Leone

#### Floods

#### Social media

https://twitter.com/UNICEFSL/status/1571905712686792710?s=20&t=p1YEn8uCOb5vJHDu88bFqA https://twitter.com/UNICEFSL/status/1570088264047935488?s=20&t=p1YEn8uCOb5vJHDu88bFqA Facebook

Facebook

Facebook

https://twitter.com/UNICEFSL/status/1552365366533308417?s=20&t=p1YEn8uCOb5vJHDu88bFqA https://twitter.com/UNICEFSL/status/1552365419087945728?s=20&t=p1YEn8uCOb5vJHDu88bFqA https://twitter.com/UNICEFSL/status/1552365386695319553?s=20&t=p1YEn8uCOb5vJHDu88bFqA https://twitter.com/UNICEFSL/status/1552365400448503811?s=20&t=p1YEn8uCOb5vJHDu88bFqA

#### Web update

UNICEF hands over WASH supplies to the NDMA for flood victims

## The Gambia

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Unusually heavy rains in July 2022 inundated hundreds of homes, including large parts of the capital city, Banjul. At least seven people were killed in the floods and more than 45,000 people affected. Floods and subsequent stagnant water posed a major risk to contamination. In some communities, water systems were completely compromised, leaving families at risk of using unsafe water. Amidst the floods, UNICEF urgently deployed prepositioned water, sanitation, and hygiene supplies through the Gambia Red Cross Society to 42,200 people an urgent relief measure.

UNICEF also responded to displacement resulting from the clashed between state security forces and separatists movements in the southern Senegalese region of Casamance, which escalated in February 2022. As a result of the Casamance crisis, the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) reported that 5,780 children (2,848 boys and 2,932 girls) were affected by two weeks of school closure.

In July 2022, The Gambia reported a sudden uptick in cases of Acute Kidney Injury (AKI) among children 4-7 years old, which ultimately killed 71 children. The deaths were attributed to contaminated cough and paracetamol syrups. The AKI raised questions about the health system and general low routine vaccine uptake, especially among children.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

#### Health

Following 71 child deaths from Acute Kidney injury (AKI) in July 2022, UNICEF supported training of health workers in management of AKI cases and the recall of suspected contaminated medicines brand from communities. UNICEF continues to support The Gambia's COVID-19 response, with the installation of a modern ultra-cold chain store with six freezers, three of which were procured by UNICEF via COVAX. UNICEF supported COVID-19 vaccination campaigns, providing exclusive funding, through USAID, of the May 2022 campaign which vaccinated 123,433 people within seven days, the highest coverage registered in a single campaign. Six vaccination campaigns were conducted in 2022, all of which supported by UNICEF. As of December 2022, 22 per cent of the population had been vaccinated with at least one dose and 18.2 per cent fully vaccinated. The AKI further increased vaccine hesitancy, evidenced by the low vaccine uptake for the MR campaign (52 per cent).

#### **Nutrition**

Following the approval of the Nutrition Policy 2021-2025, UNICEF supported the development and costing of the Multisectoral National Nutrition Strategic Plan 2022-2025. Life-saving nutrition supplies of 1,000 cartons of RUTF were procured for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). As of October 2022, 3,038 children (1,337 boys and 1,701 girls) were treated for SAM. The treatment results show a successful cure rate of 91.6 per cent, a death rate of 1.1 per cent and defaulter rate of 5.7 per cent. UNICEF supported the scaling up of mother MUAC (Mid-Upper Arm Circumference) intervention to 37 new communities in 2022 where 370 mothers received a training to teach other caregivers how to screen children for acute malnutrition using MUAC tapes. In 2022, 59,879 caregivers were counselled by mother MUAC champions on optimal Infant and Young Child Feeding practices.

#### **Child Protection**

To respond to the Casamance crisis, UNICEF provided guidance and technical support to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare during planning and coordination of response efforts. The Ministry conducted an assessment of the situation and prepared a joint report with partners to guide interventions for children. A total of 2,029 children under 5 years (1,067 male and 962 female) received support, while 7,044 children aged 6-17 years were provided mental health and psychosocial services, shelter and other relief materials.

#### **Education**

UNICEF provided technical support to the education sector, under the leadership of the Local Education Group (LEG), to monitor the school reopening and the implementation of the learning loss strategy due to COVID-19. UNICEF extended COVID-19 messaging to schools, where more teachers and students received the vaccine, especially during the May vaccination campaign exclusively funded by UNICEF and USAID. During detailed assessment of the impact of the Casamance crisis, the education team visited schools and participated in focus group discussions with affected populations. UNICEF committed to provide education supplies to the affected school children to ease their return to school.

#### WASH

In the wake of the July 2022 floods, UNICEF and the Gambia Red Cross Society deployed critical WASH supplies that had been prepositioned for emergency use. Affected families were provided with soap, buckets, collapsible water containers, and aqua-tabs (for approximately 4,600 people). In health facilities, UNICEF supported the construction of 25 handwashing stations to help with infection control. UNICEF supported the construction of 210 household VIP latrines (for approximately 1,750 people) whose toilets collapsed during the floods. UNICEF and partners also rehabilitated five water supply systems in three communities and two health facilities in three regions. To further improve drinking water quality, UNICEF supported the testing and disinfecting of 343 water points. The test results before treatment showed that 24 per cent of water points were contaminated with coliforms. As a result of these efforts, a total of 46,120 people have accessed safe drinking water and sensitized on sanitation and hygiene.

#### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

To help respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, including promotion of vaccine uptake, UNICEF and partners worked together to strengthen the capacities of 4,000 religious leaders and 1,000 young people as agent of change in creating demand for vaccination and promotion of preventive measures. These change agents further engaged 249,034 people with key messages in communities through home visits, group meetings and community dialogue. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health in positioning community structures and networks in coordinating social and behaviour change and reaching out to communities as an accelerator to COVID-19 increased awareness and vaccine uptake during

vaccination campaigns. Twenty-five Village Development Committees (VDC) were engaged to be community mobilisers. Total of 250 committee members capacity was strengthened to enable them to become social change agent in their community. Within two months of the training, total of 81,000 people were reached with key messages.

### **Human Interest Stories and External Media**

- Vaccine heroes (video) https://twitter.com/UNICEFGambia/status/1526169830482747392?s=20
- Handwashing campaign https://twitter.com/UNICEFGambia/status/1536261076391698433?s=20
- France donates vaccines <u>https://www.unicef.org/gambia/press-releases/gambia-receives-151200-jj-covid-19-vaccines-government-france</u>
- Youth choose vaccination (video) https://twitter.com/UNICEFGambia/status/1524681070326824962?s=20
- OpEd by UNICEF Rep <u>https://www.unicef.org/gambia/stories/why-its-still-important-get-vaccinated-against-covid-19</u>
- US donates vaccines to The Gambia <u>https://www.unicef.org/gambia/press-releases/gambia-receives-</u> <u>100620-pfizer-covid-19-vaccines-donated-united-states-covax</u>
- Japan supports Gambia vaccine cold chain system <a href="https://www.unicef.org/gambia/press-releases/government-japan-and-unicef-unite-against-covid-19-through-strengthening-cold-chain">https://www.unicef.org/gambia/press-releases/government-japan-and-unicef-unite-against-covid-19-through-strengthening-cold-chain</a>
- Handwashing in health facilities -<u>https://twitter.com/UNICEFGambia/status/1508399510111797258?s=20&t=\_4r9UeDE4iFQBf\_lqI\_U9g</u>
- Children practice handwashing -<u>https://twitter.com/UNICEFGambia/status/1541810358934835200?s=20&t=\_4r9UeDE4iFQBf\_lql\_U9g</u>

## Togo

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

In 2022, the spillover of the Sahel crisis into the northern part of Togo (Savanes region) has remained one of UNICEF's major concerns since the outbreak of this crisis. Data from the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in August 2022 indicated 24,551 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and Burkinabe refugees hosted in 26 localities in the Savanes region. Additional population movement was reported in December 2022, with data currently being updated. Population movement has created multi-sectoral needs with limited access to services. A total of 9 schools have already closed due to threats and insecurity, and 30 water points have become inaccessible.

### Summary Analysis of Programme Response

To ensure the quality of its interventions in the region, UNICEF has strengthened its operational and programmatic presence, including through the opening of a field presence in Dapaong in the northern border area and the recruitment of emergency specialists. Vulnerable people, especially children, have benefited from assistance in accessing essential social services especially in the areas of health, education, child protection, water, hygiene and sanitation, social inclusion,. UNICEF has strengthened the functioning of the regional platform for disaster risk reduction by the capacity building of their members, supported the operationalization of prefectural platforms and the definition of a community early warning mechanism in connection with the spillover of the Sahel crisis.

#### Health

As of 31 December 2022, Togo had recorded 39,341 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 290 deaths, including 3 children under the age of 5. Regarding vaccination against COVID-19, 1,781,552 people aged 12 years and older received a first dose, (vaccination coverage of 32.95 per cent), 1,473,534 people aged 12 years and older received two doses of vaccine, including Johnson & Johnson, (coverage of 27.25 per cent), and 143,359 people aged 12 years and older received a older received a booster dose with Pfizer 3, J&J2, Sinovac 3. UNICEF is continuing to support routine vaccination activities.

A total of 290,277, children under two years of age (147,984 girls and 142, 293 boys) were vaccinated against Measles-Rubella (MR) from January to December 2022. Additionally, 1,413 Community Health Workers (CHWs) implemented the integrated management of child illnesses in Savanes and Kara regions with the support of UNICEF. 533,121 cases of malaria, 40,441 cases of pneumonia and 18,797 cases of diarrhoea were treated in children under 5 by CHWs.

### **Nutrition**

UNICEF provided financial and technical support for the management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) through the supply of ready-to-use therapeutic foods in all regions and supporting families for the early detection of wasting through measuring the upper arm circumference (MUAC) for children in four districts in Savanes and Kara regions. As of December 2022, 8,887 children (4,621 boys and 4,266 girls) under the age of 5 suffering from severe wasting were admitted and treated in health facilities. During the same period, 90 health workers capacities were strengthened in IYCF counselling who in turn reached 396,269 women and 43,042 men with Infant and Young Child Feeding sessions. A total of 1,446,676 aged 6 to 59 months received two doses of vitamin A supplementation - out of 1,614,349 expected (90 per cent coverage). During December 2022, a nutritional SMART survey was conducted in the Savanes, Kara and Maritime regions revealing a serious level of acute malnutrition in these regions, with a global wasting prevalence of respectively 9.8 per cent, 7.2 per cent and 9.2 per cent.

### **Child Protection**

From March to May 2022, the Ministry of Social Action in collaboration with UNICEF organized seven training sessions on standard operating procedures for the care of children with protection needs including victims of violence/genderbased violence in emergency situations which brought together 237 (64 women) social and health workers. They were then able to support 2,675 children and caregivers (632 women, 95 men, 1,948 children including 473 girls) who received psychosocial support.

The monitoring of the situation of children living in street situations continues following the diagnoses carried out in the main capitals, particularly Cinkasse and Dapaong, in coordination with the Ministry of Social Action and the NGOs. The implementation of child protection plans in response to the vulnerabilities observed during the diagnostics is underway with the support of UNICEF, in particular through the use of mobile services and the equiping of the two cities with data collection and management facilities (smartphones, laptops and motorcycles).

A total of 1,199 parents and 934 children were reached by periodic informative talks on the prevention of family separation and violence, in particular gender-based violence conducted by two NGO partners.

### **Education**

As part of the preparation and response to the spillover of the Sahel crisis into the Savanes region, a rapid assessment of the needs of displaced students was carried out through Edutrac in 75 public primary schools at the start of the 2022-2023 school year. As a response to the needs identified through this rapid assessment, teaching materials and school supplies were distributed to more than 9,000 students in host schools. A total of 70,000 notebooks, 35,000 pens, 35,000 pencils, 16,000 bags, 1,525 boxes of white and chalks, 122 geometric compendium, 123 administrative and physical maps, 61 globe maps were made available to these host schools. Also, 750 benches were made and distributed to schools that had received displaced student to increase their capacity. The process of identifying providers for construction of 13 scalable classrooms was initiated to fill the school building deficit.

#### WASH

To respond to the Sahel crisis spillover in Savanes region, a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach was applied to strengthen long-term resilience and development. A total of 47 boreholes equipped with solar-manual pumps (8 in health centres, 16 in schools, 23 in communities) were built; 35,250 people (of which 17,978 are women), including those displaced in the context of spillover, improved their access to safe drinking water. This result also contributes to Infection Prevention and Control especially in health centres.

Septic tank latrines with showers and clothes washing areas were constructed in 15 health facilities, as well as ecological and bio-gas latrines in schools allowing 8,100 children (including 3,969 girls) to study in a clean environment and prevent outbreaks poor hygiene conditions. In addition, 2,165 people (including 1,407 women) in 393 households (displaced and host populations) affected by spillover benefited from hygiene kits (buckets, cups, soaps, chlorine tablets etc.) enabling them to drink clean water and improve their hygiene practices. A total of 541,265 people (including 276,045 women) living in areas at high risk of flooding received chlorine for household water treatment. Finally, 543,430 people received household water treatment.

#### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

With the support of UNICEF, the Health Promotion Division organized a workshop with 28 stakeholders to develop communication media for craftspeople, retailers, students as a prelude to the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. Outreach in two low-performing regions with populations estimated at 3,125,920 was organized that consisted of 20,000 posters, 100 pull-ups, 50,000 leaflets, 30,000 flyers, 5 audio spots in 18 languages and 2 audio visual spots in four languages.

In addition, to enable the various actors in the promotion of COVID-19 vaccination to better include the organization of community dialogues for improved acceptance and promotion of vaccination, UNICEF supported the government in a major cascade training programme at several levels and the organization of community dialogues throughout the territory. This made it possible to train 1,176 health workers, 168 municipal councillors and 11,054 community leaders in community dialogue and engagement. These series of training sessions strengthened existing community engagement mechanisms at regional, prefectural, communal and community levels and allowed the organization of large-scale community dialogues. To date, at least 2,213 dialogues have been carried out and have brought together 108,636 people, including 59,613 women and 29,152 young people under the age of 18. In addition, 2,672,637 people were reached by Community Health Workers (CHWs) through door-to-door outings in 2,222 communities in 3 of the 6 health regions as part of the RCCE strategy developed during the fortnightly vaccination against COVID-19.

## Human Interest Stories and External Media

In January 2022, Togo received 756,000 doses of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine. This was the fourth delivery of its kind, purchased with government funding, and was part of the larger government strategy of expanding vaccination to children 12 years old and upwards. With the arrival of these new doses, the Minister of Health, Professor Moustafa Mijiyawa, remarked that the challenge has now moved from supply to consumption and renewed the government's commitment to ensure that hard-to-reach people will be fully covered.

https://www.republiquetogolaise.com/sante/2101-6489-le-togo-recoit-750-000-nouvelles-doses-de-johnson-johnson/ https://togotribune.com/news/le-togo-recoit-750-000-nouvelles-doses-de-johnson-johnson/ https://www.facebook.com/afrolert/posts/125068800023749/

Thanks to the contribution of the Government of Japan through UNICEF (US\$1,622,673), within the framework of the project entitled "Emergency Assistance for the Promotion of Vaccination against COVID-19 in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa", several infrastructure projects have been completed and materials for prevention and control of the infection have been distributed within the country.

## Next SitRep: 30 June 2023

UNICEF West and Central Africa Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal: https://www.unicef.org/appeals/wca

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## Annex A

# Summary of Programme Results

Sector Indicator	UNICEF Target 2022	Total Result	# Countries reporting (Out of 10)
Number of children under 5 years vaccinated against measles	1,766,725	2,619,829	8
Number of children and women accessing primary health care in UNICEF-supported facilities	3,598,799	2,639,698	2
Nutrition			
Number of children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment	135,610	105,858	7
Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months receiving infant and young child feeding counselling	831,101	925,144	5
Child Protection			
Number of children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support	164,443	1,146,780	7
Number of people who have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers	5,091,531	419,260	6
Number of women, girls and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention, or response interventions	576,084	256,754	7
Education			
Number of children accessing formal or nonformal education, including early learning	7,235,484	4,167,516	5
Number of children receiving individual learning materials	8,573,511	7,701,806	6
Number of schools implementing safe school protocols (infection prevention and control)	80,672	64,098	7
WASH			
Number of people accessing enough safe water for drinking and domestic needs	334,837	192,166	7
Number of children use safe and appropriate WASH facilities and hygiene services in learning facilities and safe spaces	149,739	96,877	5
Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies	2,075,851	1,406,587	8
Social Protection			
Number of households reached with cash transfers through an existing government system where UNICEF provided technical assistance and/or funding	226,000	270,296	1
Number of households reached with UNICEF funded multi-purpose humanitarian cash transfers	16,460	22,613	2
C4D, community engagement and AAP			
Number of people reached with messages on access to services	22,849,394	35,332,788	8
Number of people engaged in risk communication and community engagement actions	4,962,568	4,577,775	7

## Annex B

# Funding Status by Sector<sup>3</sup>

	Requirements	Funds available					Funding gap	
Sector		Humanitarian resources received in 2022	Other resources used in 2022	Humanitarian Resources available from 2021 (Carry-over)	Other resources available from 2021 (Carry- over)	Total resources available	US\$	%
Nutrition	13,843,315	3,131,138	838,002	1,588,172	52,381	5,609,693	8,233,622	59%
Health	16,324,117	7,111,813	968,587	2,778,074	456,183	11,314,657	5,009,460	31%
WASH	18,874,068	1,279,638	290,177	2,363,964	-	3,933,779	14,940,289	79%
Child Protection, GBViE and PSEA	9,611,661	241,114	269,500	567,295	188,171	1,266,080	8,345,581	87%
Education	25,052,361	818,589	200,350	806,277	3,929,350	5,754,566	19,297,795	77%
Social Protection	20,526,264	-	49,144	15,560	884,656	949,360	19,576,904	95%
Cross- Sectoral*	11,444,209	2,090,669	230,800	3,625,609	480,274	6,427,351	5,016,858	44%
Total	115,675,995	14,672,961	2,846,560	11,744,951	5,991,015	35,255,486	80,420,509	70%

## \*HCT, C4D, RCCE and AAP

## by Country

		Funds available					Funding gap	
Country	Requirements	Humanitarian resources received in 2022	Other resources used in 2022	Humanitarian Resources available from 2021	Other resources available from 2021	Total resources available	US\$	%
				(Carry-over)	(Carry- over)			
Benin	14,912,391	504,835	-	332,508	109,920	947,263	13,965,128	94%
Côte d'Ivoire	17,633,999	216,000	248,629		29,218	493,847	17,140,152	97%
Equatorial Guinea	3,619,999	-	342,124	814,436	81,261	1,237,821	2,382,178	66%
Gambia	3,832,588	351,643		497,407	59,839	908,889	2,923,699	76%
Ghana	25,526,959	1,023,966	788,490	4,628,433	40,268	6,481,157	19,045,802	75%
Guinea Bissau	3,150,976		280,744	3,890	832,460	1,117,094	2,033,882	65%
Liberia	12,123,344	2,883,329	303,370	132,220	3,192,341	6,511,260	5,612,084	46%
Senegal	10,483,150	987,990		486,206		1,474,196	9,008,954	86%
Sierra Leone	11,115,425	6,749,054	781,841	1,102,253	86	8,633,234	2,482,191	22%
Togo	9,018,915	475,070	101,362	2,885		579,317	8,439,598	94%
WCARO	4,258,250	1,481,074		3,744,713	1,645,622	6,871,409	-	0%
Total	115,675,996	14,672,961	2,846,560	11,744,951	5,991,015	35,255,487	80,420,509	70%

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> As defined in the 2022 Humanitarian Appeal for a period of 12 months. Requirements includes COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 small scale emergency needs. Funding Status