

UNFPA MONGOLIA

Situation Report #1 on COVID-19 response



SITUATION OVERVIEW

Mongolia has reported no deaths due to COVID-19 and considered by WHO as a country which has sporadic transmission. All confirmed and reported cases are among the repatriates that have been brought back to Mongolia from other countries. In August, the Government of Mongolia has planned to organize 14 charter flights to bring in 3,500 citizens that are estranged all over the world.



COVID-19 restrictions increased the risk of domestic violence (DV) mainly due to increased economic and psychological stress, changes in the daily routines in families, lack of support from service providers and lack of opportunities to escape violent perpetrators.

There has been major slowdown on economy and many of the affected businesses are in the service sector, such as restaurants, bars, shops, and other businesses in the hospitality industry. The service sector employs a high proportion of female workers, and the loss of job or reduction in pay significantly impacted family incomes.

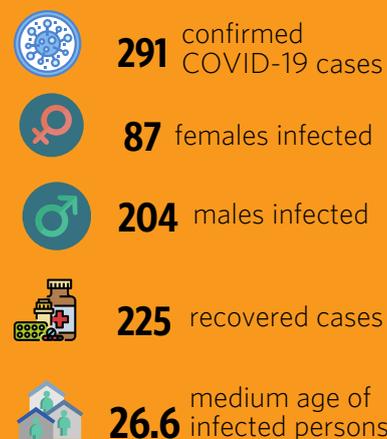
The closures of schools and kindergartens as well as the work-from-home setups for many employees substantially increased the childcare needed. This is taking a toll on parents, especially women who disproportionately take on the care work at home.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Estimated funds required for COVID-19 response by UNFPA Mongolia CO for 2020 is 2 million USD. To date, UNFPA Mongolia Country Office has successfully mobilized a total of \$1,506,076 from core and non-core resources for COVID-19 response. Funding gap is 0.5 million USD and there is a great potential for resource mobilization.

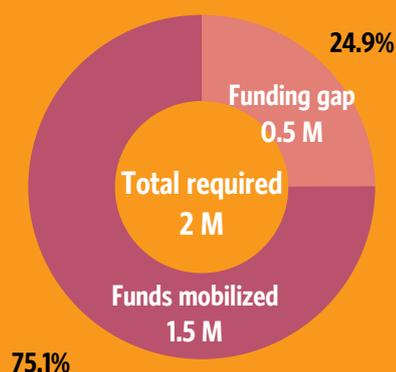
The Country Office is currently reviewing the specific needs for persons with disabilities and older persons. Funds from non-core resources include support from the Government of Japan (as part of the agreement between UNFPA and UNICEF), the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Swiss Development Agency, UN Multi Partner Trust Fund as well as private sector including Oyu Tolgoi LLC and Rio Tinto LLC Mongolia.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS



FUNDING STATUS (USD)

for COVID-19 response by UNFPA Mongolia CO for 2020



HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Mongolia has already witnessed a sharp increase of gender-based violence (GBV) due to restrictive measures to respond to COVID-19 pandemic. In the first quarter of 2020 when the restrictions were at their strictest, One Stop Service Centers (OSSCs), supported by UNFPA saw an 87% increase in the number of clients compared to the same period in 2019.

There has been an alarming increase in the number of reported cases of both DV and violence against children (VAC). The quarterly criminal data of the National Police Agency found that there was a 46.92% increase in DV offenses in Q1 2020 versus Q1 2019, with the majority being misconduct offenses that cover minor acts of violence

and first-time offenders. OSSCs for GBV survivors also reported an 87% increase in clients in the same period. In March 2020, the number of reports of physical abuse of children increased by 46.8% compared to 2019, while emotional abuse increased by 57.6%.

GOVERNMENT, UNITED NATIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS' RESPONSE

As early as January 2020, learning from the experience of responding to outbreaks of SARS and H1N1, the Mongolian Government has taken comprehensive measures to safeguard the health and well-being of Mongolian population. The State Emergency Committee was activated in January 24 and has been a main leading body to control, manage and organize the country response.

The State Emergency Committee has a taskforce which coordinates the daily work of the Committee. The United Nations developed the UN Framework for immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19, which addresses the importance of Shared responsibility and Global Solidary.



UNFPA PROGRAMME RESPONSE

The United Nations developed the UN Framework for immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19, which addresses the importance of Shared responsibility and Global Solidary. UNFPA has revised its COVID-19 Pandemic Global Response Plan in June 2020. UNFPA Mongolia's program response was prioritized three thematic areas: maternal health, gender-based violence and continuity of education services. It actively participates in the inter-agency humanitarian coordination mechanisms, and leads the GBV sub-cluster.

Addressing gender-based violence

- Extension of the "Love Doesn't Hurt" national campaign against domestic violence
- GBV prevention and awareness raising through online and televised modules on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), including GBV and stress management



- Provision of 510 Dignity Kits to women, adolescent girls and children in OSSCs and Shelters across the country
- Development and dissemination of guidelines for alternative referral pathways and continued safe service delivery for multidisciplinary teams and staff of OSSCs and shelters for GBV survivors
- Expansion of access to essential services through the establishment of two new OSSCs in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar
- Development and dissemination of guidelines for frontline workers such as healthcare providers, border patrol, police on detection, referral and principles of GBV response
- Development of tele-psychosocial counseling modalities under the OSSCs. In particular, hotlines and online psychological counselling services have been set up and fully operational
- Mental health resources have been developed and are being disseminated
- A rapid assessment of how COVID-19 pandemic has affected GBV and its implications on OSSCs' service delivery was conducted
- Supporting data GBV data literacy by conducting thorough analysis on the number of reported DV cases and misconducts and correct interpretation of data

Continuity of sexual and reproductive health services and interventions, including protection of the health workforce

- Online counseling on adolescent and youth health issues through online platforms for the Adolescent Cabinets where adolescents can have information relating to SRH, family planning, stress management, healthy relationships and mental health during the pandemic. A total of 268 adolescent and youth received online counseling
- COVID-19 preparedness assessment, drills and on-job training of maternal and newborn health services in five provinces and two districts of Ulaanbaatar
- Monitoring of maternal deaths and severe maternal complications, and conduct of confidential inquiries into maternal deaths during the pandemic
- Developed TV programmes for CSE with the Ministry of Education/Health to be integrated in the national remote e-learning curriculum in response to school closure
- Monitoring the accessibility of e-learning of health education including CSE to students and a new initiative to reach most marginalized students including students with special needs and children from herder households is initiated
- E- training for Adolescent Cabinet Doctors on adolescent and youth-friendly health services
- E-learning/training for health workers on maternal health care, with ANC and PNC telemedicine in planning phase



Continuity of youth development and participation activities

- Online counselling on youth health issues through online platforms for the Youth Development Centers (YDC) where youth can have information relating to SRH and mental health during the pandemic as well as COVID-19
- YDCs provided support services to 613 youth aged 15 to 34, particularly marginalized youth such as youth who are unemployed, out-of-school, disabled, or stay at home young mothers
- Online activities organized through the YDCs including life skills training, counselling, facilitation of support groups, and referral services to other local services such as the Adolescent Cabinet
- 124 Youth Volunteer actively engaged with community and disseminated the information about COVID-19
- Start-up initiatives implemented for young herders

Ensuring the supply of modern contraceptives and other reproductive health commodities

- Monitoring the availability of contraceptives procured by the government at service delivery points

Building partnership to unite in fight against COVID-19

- New partnerships with Rio Tinto LLC Mongolia to strengthen the capacity for COVID-19 diagnosis and service delivery for the most vulnerable. The grant will be used to set up four PCR laboratories at national and provinces level, strengthen human resources in COVID-19 diagnosis and service delivery.

STAFFING

UNFPA Mongolia Office has recruited following personnel to strengthen the human resource capacity to respond to COVID-19:

- Human Resources Assistant
- COVID-19 Coordinator
- National Media and Communication Consultant

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Op-Ed by the Head of the UNFPA Mongolia Country Office

An Op-Ed by the Head of the UNFPA Mongolia Country Office was published in both English and Mongolian languages on the Country Office's website and local news outlets for World Population Day. With the title "We need to protect women and girls during COVID-19 pandemic", the op-ed addressed the rise of gender-based violence during pandemic around the globe and in Mongolia.

"Safeguarding the rights of women and girls during the pandemic" virtual meeting

UNFPA Mongolia Country Office held a virtual meeting titled "Safeguarding the rights of women and girls during the pandemic" on July 13 with Government partners and Civil Society Organizations to call attention to the rise of GBV in Mongolia during the COVID-19 crisis. In addition to the opening remarks by Tapan Mishra, the UN Resident Coordinator in Mongolia and Kaori Ishikawa, the UNFPA Mongolia's Head of Office, Ariunzaya Ayush, the Minister of Labour and Social Protection and Arvintaria Noldogjav, the Director at the National Centre Against Violence presented at the virtual meeting.

Joint press release on handover ceremony of Dignity Kits

UNFPA and UNICEF has released a joint press release on the handover ceremony of Dignity Kits held on July 16. The dignity kits and COVID-19 guidelines were handed over to OSSCs and shelters in Ulaanbaatar.

See below for external publications:

Ikon.mn - Kaori Ishikawa: We need to protect women and girls during COVID-19 pandemic (for World Population Day) <https://ikon.mn/n/1xpv>

Gogo.mn - Violence against women and children have increased since the pandemic hit (UNFPA and UNICEF hold handover ceremony of dignity kits) <https://gogo.mn/r/55jqw>

News.mn - If the lockdown continues for another 6 months, it would likely to result 7 million unintended pregnancies (Coverage on "Safeguarding the rights of women and girls during COVID-19 pandemic" virtual event held by UNFPA Mongolia) <https://news.mn/r/2329539/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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FOR UPDATES OF COVID19 IN MONGOLIA, PLEASE VISIT:

The Ministry of Health's Daily reporting
<https://covid19.mohs.mn/p/cat/post/57/?page=2>

The State Emergency Committee's decision
<https://nema.gov.mn/c/resolution>