Highlights

- Humanitarian funding requirements were under 50 per cent met in the past six years. 2019 ended on a comparatively positive result, with a 33 per cent funding gap against the total HAC requirements. Large allocations were made late in the year and will consequently support the 2020 response. However, the *de facto* continued strong underfunding throughout the year resulted in difficulties to provide life-saving services for children across sectors. Existing vulnerabilities were further exacerbated by Cyclone Lingling which made landfall in September 2019, displacing about 6,362 people, inundating farmlands and resulting in loss of crops and damage to buildings and water and sanitation facilities.

As of end 2019, UNICEF and partners reached:

- 6.2 million people of whom 450,000 were children under 5 years, reached with essential medicines. In addition, 762,775 children with diarrhoea received oral rehydration salts nationwide through the IMNCI approach.
- About 92,330 acutely malnourished children (40,867 SAM and 51,463 MAM) were referred for treatment under the inpatient and outpatient nutrition programmes.
- Nearly 1.5 million under-five children, including 498,000 aged 6-23 months, received vitamin A supplementation with multiple micronutrient powder for their home food fortification.
- About 135,200 people from approximately 33,800 households were provided with access to safe drinking water through construction and rehabilitation of fourteen water supply systems.

UNICEF’s Response and Funding Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>SAM/MAM treatment</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>WASH</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>103%</td>
<td>61%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Safe water access</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding status</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Situation in Numbers

- 2,590,000 children in need of humanitarian assistance
- 10,900,000 people in need (2019 DPRK Needs and Priorities)

UNICEF Appeal 2019

US$19.5 million
**Funding Overview and Partnerships**

To help support the activities in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, UNICEF is thankful for the funds received in 2019 from Canada, France, Sweden as well as through the UNICEF Global Humanitarian Thematic Fund (GHTF). Two major contributions were made to the Health sector for the first time by the Russian Federation and the Korea Foundation for International Healthcare (KOFIH), an agency of the Ministry of Health and Welfare of the Republic of Korea. There were also funds carried over from CERF, France and 2018 GHTF allocations. At year-end, these generous contributions lowered the funding gap to 33 per cent, the best result in the recent six years. However, major contributions were made late in December 2019 which will be utilised in 2020. Throughout most of the year, the chronic underfunding of the HAC by more than half of the requirements hampered programme implementation and increased the risk of malnutrition and inadequate access to clean water and health services, directly affecting the most vulnerable children and women.

**Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs**

2019 saw the children of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) continuing to face risks from the effects of climate change and frequent natural hazards, chronic food insecurity and limited national capacity to provide life-saving basic services such as health care; nutrition; and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). On the 2020 INFORM Global Risk Index, DPRK was classified as being at high risk of humanitarian crisis, ranking 38 out of 191 countries. Despite humanitarian exemptions from economic sanctions, there were continued shortages of the financial resources and essential supplies needed to address the most pressing life-threatening circumstances.

In 2019, the inter-agency Needs and Priorities document estimated 11 million people, (43.4 per cent of the population) were undernourished. The 2019 Global Hunger Index showed improvement, with DPRK moving from 109 out of 119 countries in 2018 to 92 out of 117, but hunger levels were still classified as ‘serious’. The population – including the most vulnerable, 1.7 million children under age 5 – remains exposed to risks from inadequate emergency preparedness and response capacities in general. In addition, Tropical Cyclone Lingling hit DPRK in September 2019, causing population displacement in three provinces and damage to agricultural crops, households and WASH facilities.

The chronic and protracted humanitarian situation in DPRK has been overlooked by the rest of the world. The geopolitical situation affects humanitarian donor contributions, primarily channelled through United Nations agencies and international NGOs. DPRK has the lowest per capita aid in the region, despite being the last country classified in the low-income group. Humanitarian funding requirements for children – focusing on essential needs – were less than 50 per cent fulfilled over the past six years.

These factors have compounded the situation in which the delivery of basic humanitarian interventions crucial to safeguarding the lives of children and women continue to be seriously compromised.

**Summary Analysis of Programme Response**

**Nutrition**

In 2019, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN), and Technical Working Group (MoPH, ICN, UNICEF, WFP, WHO), UNICEF supported the implementation of the follow-up action plan to address the 2017 Community Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) evaluation recommendations. Through this support mechanism, UNICEF facilitated the recruitment of a technical expert to lead the CMAM treatment protocol review through which a revised structure of the protocol has been agreed with several technical reviews of the draft guideline conducted with MoPH and TWG. Nutritional support for children diagnosed with TB was incorporated both in the draft TB and CMAM guidelines.

As part of the capacity development initiatives, 31 CMAM focal points representing all provinces and convergence counties were nominated and appointed by MoPH to strengthen the quality of the programme. These focal points received a 10-day training covering both technical aspects and facilitation skills to carryout cascade training. The focal points received the necessary equipment such as motor bicycles, LCD projectors, USB flash disks and job-aids, to facilitate the roll-out of cascade training while strengthening monitoring and quality assurance of the programme at provincial, county and Ri levels. Training for CMAM master trainers and cascade training for the county- and Ri-level doctors were also facilitated and supported. Since January 2019, around 3,000 health care providers including paediatricians, nurses and household doctors were trained on the integrated CMAM-IYCF package. This knowledge and new skills will enable them to identify and manage acute malnutrition as well as promote optimal IYCF practices.

*Funding available includes: funds received in the current year; carry-over from the previous year; and repurposed funds with agreement from donors.
As of December 2019, through the CMAM programme with extensive screening, identification and referral of under-five children with acute malnutrition, around 92,330 children representing 132 per cent of UNICEF’s 2019 target, but still below (at 66 per cent) the annual national projected burden/caseload of 140,000 children were successfully treated for malnutrition. This included 40,867 children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) with or without complications and 51,463 moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) with concurrent illnesses. As per the Central Bureau of Statistics Child Data Management Unit (CBS-CDMU) data, almost all children treated (99 per cent) fully recovered from malnutrition.

In addition, the MoPH’s twice-yearly Child Health Days reached 1.5 million under-five children across the country with low-cost high-impact nutrition interventions including Vitamin A supplementation and nutrition screening. In addition, nearly 500,000 children aged 6-23 months received multiple-micronutrient powder supplements for home fortification of their complementary foods to prevent micronutrient deficiencies. However, around 44,000 pregnant and lactating women received multiple-micronutrient tablets for only six months. This was significantly below the planned target for 2019, due to funding constraints to provide supplies for the year.

The Nutrition Sector Working Group led by UNICEF with WFP as the co-lead continued to facilitate effective coordination among humanitarian partners. In close cooperation with WFP and sector partners, preventive and curative life-saving nutrition services were sustained while responding to emergencies such as Tropical Cyclone Lingling which hit the Korean Peninsula in September 2019. Thanks to Central Emergency Fund (CERF) Rapid Response allocations, UNICEF initiated a swift response.

Awareness and practical skills of 60 programme managers and health workers from two disaster-prone provinces, North Hamgyong and South Hwanghae, on nutrition programming during emergencies were enhanced through training on Nutrition-in-Emergencies. The training aimed to equip government officials with the knowledge and skills necessary for developing preparedness and response to disasters. Using the tele-advocacy system of the Grand People’s Study House (GPSH) and MoPH telemedicine approaches, 6,300 health workers, university lecturers and pregnant women gained access to information to improve their knowledge on nutrition.

Health

During 2019, UNICEF provided material, financial and technical support to the Ministry of Public Health which resulted in strong progress towards reducing neonatal, infant, childhood and maternal deaths and illnesses. Exceptional achievements were made in immunization, with the Measles-Rubella (MR) campaign effectively reaching over 5 million children and the routine immunization covering about 300,000 infants with full courses of 11 vaccine doses and 310,000 pregnant women with tetanus vaccination. Despite funding shortfalls for mother and child health and obstetric care, the CPD targets (for the third year of implementation) for Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) services in Convergence Counties were already achieved and 450,000 children under five years in 50 priority counties had access to essential medicines against key childhood killers. System capacities were strengthened through face-to-face training and remote learning of close to 900 health professionals and further development of guidelines and tools on tuberculosis and neonatal and childhood illnesses; early disability support; management of pregnancy and childbirth; and management of vaccines and health supplies.

Thanks to the strong collaborative effort between MoPH, WHO and UNICEF country and regional offices, with the support of the Chinese Centre of Disease Control and Gavi funding, 5,322,430 children above 9 months to 15 years and 544,115 females 16 to 18 years of age were vaccinated during the Measles-Rubella (MR) vaccine introduction campaign carried out in October. The campaign reached a coverage of 99 per cent according to preliminary results and validation is underway through a successful coverage evaluation survey conducted with the support of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and specialists of UNICEF and WHO regional offices.

6.2 million people including 450,000 children under 5 years in 50 priority counties were provided with access to essential medicines for the treatment of basic prevalent medical conditions. In addition, an estimated 52,000 pregnant women were reached with antenatal care and the establishment of basic and comprehensive obstetric services. The landmark partnership on disability-inclusive programming in health launched in 2018 with MoPH and the Korean Federation for the Protection of the Disabled (KFPD) supported early screening through new screening and intervention units, tools and training on early detection and intervention. At the end of the year, the withdrawal of the implementing partner Humanity and Inclusion (HI) endangered project continuity in 2020, but alternative strategies were identified to integrate disability screening and early interventions into existing MoPH IMNCI and nursery school platforms with the continued financial support of the UN Partnership for the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNPRPD).

Integration of DPRK’s TB detection into the protocol for the management of neonatal and childhood illnesses (IMNCI) was finalised in 2019 with guidelines and training of health workers in TB case management. 60 paediatricians covering
all 11 provinces and 9 Convergence Counties; 433 clinicians/paediatricians covering 201 counties; 370 Household Doctors (HHD) in 9 Convergence Counties were trained. The Integrated Management of Pregnancy and Childbirth Computerized Training Tool (IMPACtt) was adapted and translated for the dissemination of IMPAC knowledge among HHDs and other health professionals through the Tele-education system of the country.

In 2019, the DPRK was again affected by a Cyclone resulting in a total of 6,362 displaced persons in South and North Hamgyong, and South Hwanghae Provinces. Close surveillance of diarrheal cases was carried out by the Health Sector Working Group co-lead by UNICEF in view of the looming food insecurity situation and water scarcity.

Routine Immunization is not part of the 2019 HAC appeal, since it is appropriately funded by Gavi and the South Korean NatCom. In addition, the country did not experience any stock rupture of vaccines with 97 per cent of children under 16 months and pregnant women immunized as per the EPI national schedule.

**WASH**

In 2019 alone, UNICEF direct humanitarian interventions reached a combined catchment population of 515,600 people with support on the installation of 10 new water supply systems and rehabilitation of 14 water systems. With the completion of seven new water systems and the repair and rehabilitation of another seven, humanitarian support in WASH improved quality of life for about 135,200 people and prevented disease and death especially among vulnerable young children, women and the elderly. About 20,000 people were directly reached with hygiene and sanitation messages through direct training, the tele-advocacy system and Global Handwashing Day celebration. In addition, the general population was reached with hygiene messages through mass media and national television.

UNICEF collaborated with the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) to support the government and mobilized the sector in advancing the agenda of safely managed sanitation services and elimination of virtual open defecation situation in the country.

At the national level, UNICEF in partnership with the SDC supported the Ministry of Urban Management (MoUM) to organize the peer-to-peer 2019 National Sanitation Learning Event and brought together five Ministries, seven other government agencies, including academia and three county People’s Committees, and nine international organizations. At the operational level, UNICEF supported the MoUM and Pyongyang University of Agriculture (PUA) to conduct one experiment on safe and optimal composting method, on development of technical design and guideline on composting, on urine-diverting dry toilets (UDDT), in piloting of 1,000 UDDTs and composting in three counties. This allowed testing the efficacy of toilets and treatment method as a safely managed sanitation solution while optimally recovering nutrients for re-use in agriculture.

UNICEF led the sector working with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Concern Worldwide as co-chairs and the MoUM as a member in all its meetings and also coordinated preparedness and response. For a swift response, UNICEF always maintains prepositioned WASH relief supplies for 10,000 families.

Through CERF allocations, UNICEF supported water and hygiene kits for at least 6,200 mother-child couples with severe acute malnutrition undergoing treatment at 28 county hospitals. In the aftermath of Cyclone Lingling, UNICEF received additional CERF funding to support an estimated 440 flood-affected families in Yonggwang county in South Hamgyong with relief items. 89,500 people including an estimated 22,000 children provided with access to clean drinking water and hygiene supplies.

**Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy**

Humanitarian partners work closely with relevant government authorities to ensure effective selection of beneficiaries, implementation and monitoring of operations. While the government counterpart for UN agencies is the National Coordinating Committee (NCC), INGOs and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) work through the Korean European Cooperation Coordination Agency (KECCA), and the ICRC and IFRC through the DPRK National Red Cross Society. Nevertheless, all humanitarian agencies come together in the HCT and subsidiary technical Sector Working Groups (SWGs). The Resident Coordinators Office is supported by a full-time OCHA Coordination Officer who provides support for emergency preparedness and response.

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1 It includes projects which were carried over from 2018.
UNICEF leads the Nutrition and WASH sector working groups and co-leads Health with WHO. UNICEF is also actively participating in the DRR and Gender working groups. In adherence with the Core Commitments for Children (CCCs), and in coordination and collaboration with the government and other stakeholders, UNICEF provides humanitarian support in the sectors of health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene for the most vulnerable children and women.

To sustain the delivery of life-saving interventions, UNICEF is continuously working with partners to apply its three-pronged strategic approach of building the capacities of local service providers and caregivers; strengthening timely and effective delivery of essential health, nutrition and WASH interventions, especially for children under 5 years and pregnant and lactating women; and providing basic and essential humanitarian supplies in line with global standards. UNICEF applies an integrated approach to health, nutrition, WASH and social inclusion programming that will contribute to reducing maternal and under-five mortality, addressing undernutrition among women and girls and facilitating equitable access to basic WASH services.

Human Interest Stories and External Media
During the reporting period, the Country Office received in-country support from the Regional Communications Specialists. Human interest stories on one Convergence County and the 2018 floods were produced and uploaded onto the regional blog.


Next SitRep: 30/06/2020

UNICEF DPRK: https://www.unicef.org/dprk

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### Summary of Programme Results

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<td></td>
<td>2019 Target</td>
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<td><strong>NUTRITION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Children under 5 years suffering from wasting treated through inpatient and outpatient therapeutic feeding programmes</td>
<td>70,000</td>
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<td>Children under 5 years provided with micronutrient supplementation</td>
<td>1,600,000</td>
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<td><strong>HEALTH</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Children under 5 years with diarrhoea treated with oral rehydration salts</td>
<td>890,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>People accessing essential medicines</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
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<td>Pregnant mothers in 50 counties accessing emergency obstetric neonatal care services</td>
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<td><strong>WATER, SANITATION &amp; HYGIENE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of people with access to safe drinking water</td>
<td>223,00</td>
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<td>Number of reached with hygiene and sanitation messages</td>
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Annex B

Funding Status*

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<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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<td>Humanitarian resources received in 2019</td>
<td>Resources available from 2018 (Carry-over)</td>
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<td>3,204,151</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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* As defined in Humanitarian Appeal of January 2019 for a period of 12 months