STANDARD CHARtered
AND UNICEF: OUR IMPACT

Over the last year UNICEF’s education and protection response in the 12 countries highlighted on the map, has reached a staggering 95.6 million people. Support from Standard Chartered was enough to help reach 27.9 million people.

Of the 84,457 safe schools where protocols have been rolled out, there are an even greater number of indirect beneficiaries as the entire student population will benefit from these.

The vast majority of these beneficiaries were reached within the first six months, as reported in our mid-year update.

This is due to the speed and scale at which coronavirus spread throughout the world, necessitating a surge in response and a diversion of resources towards the crisis. This includes the swift establishment and national scale-up of initiatives to ensure every child was able to continue learning away from the physical school building. These initiatives are capable of reaching vast numbers of learners far greater than the classroom.

With many schools having reopened their doors in October 2020, distance and/or remote learning, while still a priority, has become less of an immediate humanitarian need in 2021.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Our donation has enabled vulnerable children to not only stay safe in the face of multiple existing and new coronavirus-related threats, but also to keep up with their studies. Over the past year, we have helped enable the following:

- Children have accessed remote learning opportunities.
- National governments have been supported to develop and implement ‘safe schools’ guidance.
- Children separated from their families have accessed alternative care.
- Vulnerable children have had continuous access to social services.
- UNICEF personnel and partners have received training on gender-based violence, risk mitigation and referrals for survivors.

...OF WHICH STANDARD CHARTERED’S DONATION WAS ENOUGH TO HELP SUPPORT 27.9 MILLION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>189,293</td>
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<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<td>Zambia</td>
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</table>
AFRICA

THE SITUATION

Based on UNICEF’s needs assessment 12 months ago, we planned to support over 38 million children across the seven recipient countries (Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia) of Standard Chartered’s donation.

As we reach the end of our year in partnership, we’ve reached approximately 14.8 million beneficiaries in Africa.

Initially, UNICEF had focused its response plan on the total number of children who would require access to remote education. However, as the pandemic progressed and countries launched their remote education programmes, it became clear that it would be most useful for UNICEF to focus its response on the most vulnerable children facing specific challenges, such as children with disabilities, children living in very remote regions with no ability to access online education, and children living in conflict affected regions.

EDUCATION

UNICEF focused on supporting countries in the west and central parts to reopen schools. By the end of 2020, 22 out of 24 countries started the 2020-2021 school year, whereas an estimated 70 per cent of primary school learners in the east and south remained out of school. Even though many countries in these parts are reopening schools, millions of children remain unable to access learning.

PROTECTION

In West and Central Africa, before the onset of the pandemic more than 80 per cent of children experienced violence in their homes and more than 1 in 10 children experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. Over 7 million children have been forcibly displaced due to armed conflict and the region has the highest rates of child marriage globally.

Rates of gender-based violence, child neglect and abuse have also worsened across most of the east and southern parts. In 2020, the protection of children became a significant concern in a fast-changing environment with millions of new children at increased risk of violence, exploitation and abuse.

CORONAVIRUS IN THE REGION

Although the region has some of the lower rates and number of coronavirus cases in the world, the east and southern part of the continent experienced a rise in infections in healthcare workers by the end of 2020, whereas the west and central parts are still reporting cases of community transmission.

In the latter, the testing capacities of most countries are still limited, meaning the number of cases and deaths are likely to be much higher than official reports state.

Nalem, a student in Uganda, credits the teaching style of her English teacher to how well she can speak the language.

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AFRICA

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The below examples are just a few of the results achieved for children in Africa thanks to Standard Chartered’s generous donation:

- In Cameroon, 189,293 learners have been reached with remote learning support and materials in response to school closures.
- In Côte d’Ivoire, 105,778 people have been reached with protection services including counselling, alternative care and vocational training.
- In Ghana, over 9 million people were supported with remote learning opportunities and UNICEF supported 52,725 schools to reopen safely.
- In Kenya, 191,305 children have benefitted from remote learning programmes such as radio lessons and also learning materials.
- In Uganda, over 2.5 million people have benefitted from remote learning support.
- In Tanzania, 2.5 million children were provided with access to remote education.
- In Zambia, remote learning options and materials were provided to 62,000 people.
CAMEROON

Cameroon is one of the countries in Africa most affected by the pandemic. The Government ordered all schools to close, adding to an existing learning crisis in the North-West and South-West regions caused by an enforced boycott of education by armed separatist groups.

In summer 2020 exam-level students returned to school and all schools reopened in October.

UNICEF’S RESPONSE

Thanks to our donation, alongside that of other supporters, UNICEF achieved the following:

- 189,293 learners have been reached with remote learning support and materials in response to school closures.
- UNICEF supported the implementation of safe schools protocols in 7,887 schools.
- With the focus shifting to risk mitigation to prevent the spread of the virus on school premises, as well as students’ wellbeing, UNICEF distributed hand-washing supplies to 53,000 pupils in 100 primary and pre-primary schools.
- Likewise, schoolteachers were trained to provide counselling support to children, which will benefit 61,470 students.

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROVIDES CHILDREN WITH A ROUTINE

In South-West Cameroon, a ground-breaking radio programme has allowed more than 3,500 crisis-affected children to continue their learning.

School buildings have been burned, students and teachers kidnapped. Armed groups have used schools as bases, torturing and holding people hostage in and near them.

The impact of the education crisis has led to severe protection risks including sexual exploitation, gender-based violence, forced recruitment by armed forces, arbitrary arrest, early marriage and pregnancy. Many children have been separated from their families or have become heads of their household.

The radio programme—which focuses on literacy, numeracy and life-skills—is providing a first or second chance to learn for over 3,000 children who have never before attended school or who have dropped out.

“Most of these children are coming from the villages that have been burned down. They are really happy to be in this area to learn in the safe learning spaces we have created,” says Njato Georges, Project Coordinator.

“They have learned a lot. Some of them who could not read and had not been in school for two or three years can now read, they can write, they can speak English, they can calculate.”

Favour, age 11, and her family were forced to escape their village. After three years out of the classroom, she speaks of how the programme is nurturing her ambitions.

“I’m happy to have resumed with school. I made many friends here. I liked maths. My ambition is to become a doctor to help others suffering from sickness.”

“MY AMBITION IS TO BECOME A DOCTOR TO HELP OTHERS.”

The initiative is making a real difference to individual lives. This is just the beginning, as there are many more young children like Favour whose dreams remain out of reach due to the ongoing conflict and crisis.
CÔTE D’IVOIRE

In a country where over 1 million children are undocumented and 80 per cent are victims of violent discipline, the socio-economic impact and limited availability of social services resulting from a pandemic can be particularly detrimental to children’s lives.

**UNICEF’S RESPONSE**

Thanks to support from Standard Chartered and other partners, **105,778 beneficiaries** have been reached with protection services.

- Transit centres hosting street children were provided with **hygiene materials and handwashing kits** to prevent the spread of the pandemic and ensure these vital spaces remain open.
- Social workers provided **counselling** to 2,112 children and **awareness campaigns to prevent violence against children** reached 4,189 people.
- The Ministry of Family, Women and Children established a **mobile team to identify children living on the street** and refer them to alternative care facilities to protect them against coronavirus. So far 646 children have received support and 261 have been reunited with their parents.
- 125 street children have been placed in **vocational training centres** and 385 have been enrolled in school.

**PROTECTING YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE MOVE**

Amadou, age 16, is originally from Conakry, the capital of Guinea. He loves football. When his father heard there was a chance for his son to attend a training camp in Côte d’Ivoire, he jumped at it.

But things didn’t go according to plan when Amadou arrived in Abidjan. Instead of heading to a training camp, he had to work for the woman who was supposed to be taking care of him. He says he always got blamed if something went missing and he was sometimes beaten.

Amadou eventually decided to run away, but with nowhere else to go, he was forced to live on the streets, relying on friends for food and a place to sleep.

“One of my friend’s parents put me in contact with a social worker. That’s how I arrived at the child protection centre,” he says. After spending several difficult months living on the streets, he moved to a centre in Abobo, a suburb of Abidjan, where he receives food, shelter and classes. There, UNICEF is helping him reunite with his family.

“They’ll help me find my parents and help me get back to Conakry to be with my father,” he says. “But I still dream about becoming a football player.”

UNICEF provides young people at the centres with a chance to get back into formal education as well as opportunities to learn a trade. This prevents them from returning to the streets after they leave. The centres offer a place for young people to play games, socialise—to be children.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, they have also been helping sensitise children about the risks posed by the virus, as well as providing advice on how they can keep themselves safe.
Even before the pandemic, UNICEF was working with the Ministry of Education to create a more child-friendly environment in schools. This is because classrooms are overcrowded, water and sanitation facilities are inadequate and trained teachers and books are in short supply. The poor quality of education is reflected in students’ results.

The shift to remote learning in 2020, alongside the consequent drafting and implementation of safe schools protocols, has bolstered efforts to improve learning for all children.

**UNICEF’S RESPONSE**

- Over 9 million people were supported with remote learning opportunities, such as a national radio learning programme. This was supported by mobile libraries.
- 52,725 schools to were supported to reopen safely.
- UNICEF and the World Bank have strengthened an existing in-service teacher training programme to improve children’s literacy and numeracy levels.
- A mass-media back-to-school campaign has been launched to ensure every child is in school, safe and learning. This includes guidance on preventing early pregnancy, ensuring children are enrolled at the right age and guidance on education for children with a disability.

**CELEBRATING THE FIRST DAY BACK AT SCHOOL**

The scene is slightly different, but the sounds remain the same.

Following the reopening of schools, children and teachers are having to wear face masks, greater attention is being given to handwashing with soap and running water and seats are more widely spaced out. Yet the sense of vibrancy, optimism and peals of laughter all feel very familiar.

Eva Bani is the Principal at Nima One primary school. “The children are clearly very happy to return to school. We have a team of teachers fully ready to support children and ensure protocols are met,” Mrs Bani told us. “With the supply of the handwashing stalls, children will practice washing their hands at school and will take these skills home.”

“**CHILDREN WILL PRACTICE WASHING THEIR HANDS AT SCHOOL AND WILL TAKE THESE SKILLS HOME.**”

**Pursuing dreams**

Mariatu wants to be a lawyer and knows that she has to both stay safe and work hard to achieve her dreams. “It is difficult to wear a mask, but I understand it helps to protect us from COVID-19,” she says. “If I see that some of my friends do not wear a mask, I will tell them that it is risky.”

**Additional benefits of being at school**

For many children, going to school is important not only for learning but also for staying healthy through regular sight, hearing and cognitive screening as well as by getting a free school meal.

This helps provide an individual learning pathway tailored to the needs of each child and increases the likelihood that they will stay in school longer.
KENYA

School closures in March 2020 interrupted learning for a staggering 17 million students. Access to education was already limited for girls due to gender inequality, including the burden of household chores falling on girls, teenage pregnancies and child marriage. Coronavirus-related school closures have worsened the situation.

UNICEF’S RESPONSE

- 191,305 children have benefitted from remote learning programmes such as radio lessons and also learning materials.
- 23,269 households have received a solar-powered radio, benefitting 93,000 children.
- Over 1,300 schools were supported to implement protocols for reopening safely. This includes the distribution of over 713,000 face masks and handwashing facilities to 333 schools.
- UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Education to deliver a ‘Back to School’ campaign and is also launching an out-of-school programme to ensure that all children who are currently out of school are enrolled and stay in school. It includes economic empowerment of parents, teacher training and mentorship.

HANDWASHING SUPPORTS SCHOOLS TO REOPEN

Prudence, age 14, from Roysambu Primary School in Nairobi County is one of the hundreds of thousands of students who are now back in school.

“It feels good to be back in school after such a long time,” Prudence says. “I was starting to forget some of the things that I had learnt. I feel safer while I am here in school because I interact with fewer people and we observe the preventative measures against the spread of coronavirus.”

“IT FEELS GOOD TO BE BACK IN SCHOOL AFTER SUCH A LONG TIME.”

Prudence, who is the President of the Students’ Council, hopes to sit for her national exams and continue with her normal life. “Some of the changes I have seen since coming back to school include maintaining social distance in and outside classes and wearing face masks,” she says. “There are handwashing facilities almost everywhere.”

To help with the safe reopening of schools, UNICEF worked with the Government to develop guidelines for schools and is continuing to distribute soap and install handwashing facilities in many schools that don’t have any, or that don’t have enough.

“As children return to school, we are working with the Government and partners to help ensure a smooth transition for learners, teachers and the wider community,” UNICEF Chief of Education Marilyn Hoar says.

“As well as supporting water, sanitation and hygiene in schools, we are continuing to provide remote learning support for children whose year groups are not yet back in school and providing parents with reliable and accurate information.”
Since June 2020, 97 per cent of registered school children have returned to school. However, the majority of students from pastoral and mining communities have not returned. Families in these parts are reliant on their children to provide extra labour, for example, by tending to animals.

**UNICEF’S RESPONSE**

**Standard Chartered’s support has helped:**
- reach over 2.5 million children with access to remote education.
- develop and disseminate 300,000 posters to 20,269 schools, reaching 14 million children with virus prevention information.
- provide 150 primary schools with hygiene and handwashing supplies including soap, buckets and washing stands.

In October 2020, 1.2 million children due to sit their exams returned to school. With schools reopening in a phased manner from March 2021, the number of children out of school and in need of education assistance will drop from 13 million to 2 million.

**UNICEF’S RESPONSE**

**Standard Chartered’s support has helped:**
- reach over 2.5 million people with remote learning support.
- facilitate the reopening of 767 schools.
- UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Sports to develop strategies for catching up on missed learning, for example, small group study sessions and radio programmes.
- support 12 refugee-hosting districts to develop education response plans.

Controlling the pandemic in Zambia is threatened by widespread poverty, lack of access to information and limited means to adhere to disease control measures such as handwashing and social distancing.

**UNICEF’S RESPONSE**

**Standard Chartered’s support has helped:**
- provide remote learning options to 62,000 people.
- support 1,500 schools to reopen safely.
- increase adherence to public health guidance through the #MaskUpZambia initiative—launched by the Minister of Health—to promote regular and correct mask wearing in public places. Hundreds of young people, alongside online influencers, celebrities and diplomats, posted photos of themselves wearing a mask and spreading the word by using the hashtag.
THE SITUATION

Based on UNICEF’s needs assessment six months ago, our donation was planned to support over 41 million children across the five recipient countries: Bangladesh, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan.

As we reach the end of our year in partnership, we’ve reached approximately 80.7 million beneficiaries across Asia.

High rates of access to technology have meant that we have been able to reach millions of families via radio, television and other technologies with access to education, information and support.

EDUCATION

New surges in cases of coronavirus in a number of countries resulted in renewed school closures during the first three months of the year, although many across the region have now reopened once again. However, most schools in Myanmar remain closed in part due to political crisis and conflict.

In South Asia, it is estimated that children have lost the equivalent of six months of learning, with projections that as many as 5.5 million students could drop out from the education system altogether. These students will join 29 million children of primary and lower secondary age who are already out of school in the region.

PROTECTION

Many children, adolescents and caregivers in the east, including the Pacific Islands, continue to face distress caused by pandemic-related economic stress and anxiety. In some cases, this may lead to abuse and exploitation, and the shift to virtual learning is increasing instances of online and/or sexual abuse.

The pandemic is also worsening challenges already present in the delivery of child protection services, including limited access to and availability of social workers, as well as focus on response instead of prevention.

CORONAVIRUS IN THE REGION

Over one year after the outbreak of coronavirus was first reported in Wuhan, China, the pandemic continues to have a devastating impact on children’s lives.

The number of confirmed cases and deaths in the eastern countries and Pacific Islands have more than doubled in 2021.

As of May 2021, cases in India, Nepal and other countries in South Asia are rising. South Asia’s GDP is expected to decline by 7.7 per cent, the largest contraction in history, dragging millions of people into poverty.
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The below examples are just a few of the results achieved for children in Africa thanks to Standard Chartered’s generous donation:

- In Bangladesh, 19 million children have benefitted from remote learning programmes using TV, radio, mobile phone and internet platforms.
- In Laos, over 3.5 million children, parents and caregivers have benefitted from community-based mental health support and alternative care arrangements.
- In Myanmar, 8,000 children who were out of the formal education system even prior to the pandemic continue to receive non-formal education.
- In Pakistan, a staggering 58 million children and caregivers have been provided mental health support, and have been reached with key messages to prevent the stigmatisation of those affected by coronavirus.
- In Nepal, 585 child protection concerns were recorded in a new UNICEF-piloted, mobile-based incident report system.
BANGLADESH

Schools in Bangladesh have been closed since March 2020. Around 42 million children are affected by the closures, leaving them reliant on remote learning. However, not all students have access to digital technology and virtual classes are falling short of their learning needs.

Reported cases of child marriage have risen over the past year, increasing by over 100 during March-April 2020 when the pandemic was declared. This is thought to be linked to rising income poverty and the movement of families to cheaper, sub-urban and rural areas.

UNICEF’S RESPONSE

- Working with the Government, 19 million children have benefitted from remote learning programmes using TV, radio, mobile phone and internet platforms. We have also produced guides to assist teachers remotely.
- UNICEF continues to advocate with the Minister of Education for the safe reopening of schools. We are helping district authorities and 2,210 schools to prepare reopening plans.
- All 18 safe spaces for women and girls and 104 multi-purpose centres in camps and host communities are operational and providing counselling support, referrals and limited skills development activities. Over 4,400 children have received family-based alternative care.

CHILDREN’S EXPERIENCE OF REMOTE LEARNING

Students have shared that remote learning is helping them remain in touch with their studies, but it brings many challenges.

“In comparison to the classroom, online learning lacks the required academic direction, assessment and inter-activity. Our classes are often affected by poor internet connectivity, data expiry and power outages,” says Nishat.

Other students shared concerns about the long-term impact of protracted school closures and the negative effects on children’s education, wellbeing and futures.

“Remote education cannot be a long-term solution for continuous learning. School is not only a place for academic activity, it is a hub for many co-curricular activities. We are fast losing our social skills and talents due to excessive dependence on technology,” highlighted 14-year-old Tajbir.

Unequal access

A recent report by UNICEF and the International Telecommunication Union found that 63 per cent of Bangladesh’s school-age children have no internet access at home.

To make remote education accessible, students recommend lowering internet tariffs and providing free learning platforms.

Creating a level playing field

From the onset of the pandemic, UNICEF supported the Government of Bangladesh to develop and implement a strategy on remote learning using multiple platforms, including basic mobile phones and text messages instead of smartphones. We continue to work with the Government to deliver a printed learning package to these children’s doorsteps, so no child is left behind.

“As we scale up our education programme, we must listen to the voices of children and young people so we can continually improve the quality of education—whether it’s online or in person. In this case, students are our best teachers,” said Nor Shirin Md Mokhtar, Chief of Education, UNICEF Bangladesh.
Few community-based child protection services exist in Laos to support children at risk of or in situations of harm. Violence, abuse and exploitation of children are difficult to measure, as they are often hidden within the family and exacerbated by gender inequality.

What we do know is that due to deep-rooted social norms, a quarter of caregivers believe that physical punishment is necessary, and a third of women aged 20-49 were married before their 18th birthday.

**UNICEF’S RESPONSE**

With our help, over 3.5 million children, parents and caregivers have benefitted from:

- community-based mental health and counselling support.
- alternative care arrangements for children without parental care.

Learning has been disrupted for almost 12 million children in Myanmar due to widespread school closures since the start of the pandemic. As of March this year, security forces have reportedly occupied more than 60 schools and university campuses in 13 states and regions.

**UNICEF’S RESPONSE**

Despite this, our support has helped to:

- reach 45,580 children with learning opportunities, including through the distribution of remote learning materials.
- provide 696 teachers with training on quality inclusive education.
- continue to deliver non-formal education to 8,000 children who were out of the formal education system even prior to the pandemic.

Due to coronavirus prevention measures, community engagement has remained limited, especially raising awareness about stigma. Likewise, arranging online trainings for frontline workers has proved challenging due to their extended work hours as well as limited electricity and poor internet connection.

**UNICEF’S RESPONSE**

With support from Standard Chartered and other partners, over 58 million children and caregivers have benefitted from:

- mental health support for children and families affected by the pandemic.
- stigma prevention messages shared via print and social media to prevent and address the marginalisation of communities affected by coronavirus.
- training on psychosocial support and stigma reduction for frontline workers.
After a long and sudden lockdown, Nepal has eased restrictions on mobility, resumed the delivery of social services and reopened schools progressively since December 2020.

With schools reopening, the daily burden of care for many women and girls has decreased while pressure to secure household income in a vulnerable economy has increased. The reopening of borders with neighbouring India has been both encouraging due to it being a major market for Nepali households living in border areas and concerning due to trafficking risks for extremely vulnerable young people.

UNICEF’s RESPONSE

- 2,800 children without parental or family care have been provided with appropriate alternative care.
- 19,960 children and caregivers were provided with community mental health support, for example via helplines.
- UNICEF supported local governments to identify vulnerable households and provide adequate referrals and/or socio-economic support.
- 585 child protection concerns were recorded in a new UNICEF-piloted, mobile-based incident report system, enabling service providers to alert officials to potential violations. Child labour, child marriage and poor mental health were among the main issues.

“IT’S ABOUT BUILDING TRUST & CONFIDENCE.”

Counsellor Laxman was facilitating a session on mental health with students in far-western Nepal when 13-year-old Dil Maya*, opened up about her struggles.

“She said she was feeling a great deal of fear and worry linked to the pandemic,” says Laxman. “She was deeply afraid of being infected by the virus, transmitting it to her family and how the community would treat her and her loved ones if they got sick.”

This, according to Laxman, is one of the many secondary impacts of coronavirus. Prolonged lockdowns, restrictions in mobility and school closures have led to a rise in anxiety, stress, isolation, depression, and even suicide among young people.

“This disease has touched each and every person in some way, and it has brought enormous social, emotional and mental health challenges for children,” he says.

Laxman reached out to the school’s principal to discuss whether Dil Maya could receive individual counselling.

Laxman explains that the counselling process, especially when working with children, requires time and patience—“it’s about building trust and confidence.”

Over the next few sessions, Laxman and Dil Maya discussed the negative thoughts that had been causing her so much anxiety, breaking down the reasons behind her fears and countering these with facts—such as the actual nature of the disease, safety measures that one can follow, as well vast numbers of people who have recovered from the disease. Laxman also provided tips on self-care and managing stress and encouraged Dil Maya to open up more to friends and family.

In follow up calls, the young girl has reported feeling much stronger emotionally and is finding ways to keep her body and mind occupied, such as through reading, listening to music and meditating on the weekends.
These two friends are delighted to be reunited at their school.

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