**Kosovo**

**Title:** Return to (New) Normal in Kosovo1: Strengthening resilience through a safe and inclusive return to normality in health and education in the wake of COVID-19

**End date:** 31 March 2021

**Programme summary**

As Kosovo reopened after the initial lockdown in the middle of 2020, it has embarked on its recovery process and sought to respond to a second wave of infections. This project is funded by an earmarked contribution in support of Kosovo’s recovery process and reduce vulnerability to future waves. The project aimed at ensuring continuous access to health and education services for the most vulnerable groups of children (including children living with disabilities) young women and girls, non-majority groups (including Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities).

**Early results under Pillar 1. Health First**

Overall, programme activities have greatly improved Kosovo’s capacity to contain the COVID-19 pandemic in line with Pillar 1 of the Social Economic Response Plan. During its implementation period the joint programme has:

* Contributed to increasing Kosovo’s testing capacity ten-fold since the beginning of the crisis.
* Provided **two PCR machines and 2 RNA extraction machines** to the newly established regional labs in Prizren and Gjilan/Gnjilane, and **10,000 PCR tests** donated to six regional laboratories across Kosovo
* **Donated 1,206 vaccine carriers/ cold boxes** to the Ministry ofHealth. The carriers were distributed to field front line immunization teams carrying out regular vaccines, with a view to help with catch-up of vaccines in schools. The boxes were used to support daily vaccination activities as an indispensable input to this process focusing particularly on areas where vaccination was lagging behind OR had been put on hold due to the pandemic.
* Provided **one mobile x-ray machine** to the Gračanica/Graçanica Health Centre, to enhance health centre response and control infection through state-of-the-art diagnoses
* Implemented a catch-up door to door **vaccination campaign** with vaccination teams **in 20 municipalities** to reach children whose scheduled immunisations had been put on hold during the lockdown from March to May 2020.
* Reached at least **4,121 children** and 5,645 families through the vaccination programme.
* **2,503 baby kits were distributed** to vaccinated children and vaccination centres
* **Trained 44 youth** (29 boys and 15 girls) from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities to conduct door-to-door visits to families to collect relevant data on vaccination records, and raising awareness on the importance of immunization.
* Vaccinated **1,886 children from vulnerable families were vaccinated** (the majority of children were from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities).
* Provided useful tools for diagnostics and control infection to doctors in one municipality serving one town and 15 villages (including 1 mobile x-ray machine donated to the Gračanica/Graçanica Health Centre)
* The provision of **remote diagnostic services** (sparing patients exposure to cross-contamination in health facilities and ensuring continuous access to medical advice even in lockdown conditions) has been facilitated by the delivery of 186 tablets with sim cards/Internet credit to 16 primary health centres of Pristina, with an **average of 300 virtual consultations per week** by all 16 centres during the first weeks of implementation.

**Pillar 2. Protecting People**

To facilitate safe and inclusive reopening of schools the programme has:

* Provided practical guidelines and hygiene kits for **over 95 per cent of public schools (1020 schools) in Kosovo.**
* Provided COVID-19 protection kits to over **3,108 teachers**.
* Assessed **100 schools for WASH conditions** and COVID-19 measures.
* Targeted training and support, as well as the delivery of essential IT equipment to children, schools and parents allowed at risk groups to **benefit from learning opportunities and prevent them from falling behind** during ongoing COVID-19 mitigation measures.
* Provided **948 children with disabilities** with tablets or laptops
* Provided **190 children with disabilities** with laptops and training in basic IT and research skills to ensure access to distance learning
* Around **2,000 teachers increased their knowledge of tools and resources** to better support pupils respond to mental health challenges during COVID-19 and further promote mental health wellbeing as part of pupils’ core education
* **Deployed 40 teaching assistants for children with disabilities** in six municipalities
* **1,140 teachers increased their knowledge** and capacity to use distance learning platform *shkollat.org* and digital services to ensure that no-one is left behind in terms of access to quality learning

**Digital innovation and data collection**

**The programme took an innovative approach to COVID-19 related data collection and visualization by creating a digital mapping platform with gender disaggregated date to identify patterns in drop-out rates amongst girls and children from vulnerable communities.** The platform is available to both local and central institutions and authorities and displays key data on education through user-friendly data visualization tools. The Platform can be accessed at [www.digitalplatform.unkt.org](http://www.digitalplatform.unkt.org) .

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