**UNICEF launches #Reimagine campaign to prevent the pandemic from becoming a lasting crisis for children, including in Armenia**

*As COVID-19 devastates already fragile health systems, over 6,000 additional children under five could die a day, without urgent action*

**NEW YORK/YEREVAN, 20 MAY 2020** – An additional 6,000 children could die every day from preventable causes over the next six months as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to weaken health systems and disrupt routine services, UNICEF said today. The estimate is based on an analysis by researchers from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, [newly published in The Lancet Global Health journal](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X%2820%2930229-1/fulltext). Based on the worst of three scenarios in 118 low- and middle-income countries, the analysis estimates that an additional 1.2 million under-five deaths could occur in just six months, due to reductions in routine health service coverage levels and an increase in child wasting.

These potential child deaths will be in addition to the 2.5 million children who already die before their 5th birthday every six months in the 118 countries included in the study, threatening to reverse nearly a decade of progress on ending preventable under-five mortality. Some 56,700 more maternal deaths could also occur in just six months, in addition to the 144,000 deaths that already take place in the same countries over a six-month period.

In addition,UNICEF is deeply alarmed by the other knock-on effects of the pandemic on children:

* An estimated 77% of children under the age of 18 worldwide – 1.80 billion out of 2.35 billion – were living in one of the 132 countries with stay-at-home policies, as of early May.
* Nearly 1.3 billion students – over 72% – are out of school as a result of nationwide school closures in 177 countries.
* 40% of the world’s population are not able to wash their hands with soap and water at home.
* Nearly 370 million children across 143 countries who normally rely on school meals for a reliable source of daily nutrition must now look to other sources as schools are shuttered.
* As of 14 April, over 117 million children in 37 countries may miss out on their measles vaccination as the pandemic causes immunization campaigns to stop to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

This week, UNICEF is launching #Reimagine, a global campaign to prevent the COVID-19 pandemic from becoming a lasting crisis for children, especially the most vulnerable children – such as those affected by poverty, exclusion or family violence. Through the campaign, UNICEF is issuing an urgent appeal to governments, the public, donors and the private sector to join UNICEF globally, including in Armenia, as we seek to respond, recover and reimagine a world currently besieged by the coronavirus:

* **Respond.** We must act now to stop the disease from spreading, help the sick, and protect first responders on the frontlines risking their own lives to save others.
* **Recover.** Even when the pandemic slows, each country will have to continue to work to mitigate the knock-on effects on children and address the damage inflicted. Communities will also have to work together, and across borders to rebuild and prevent a return of the disease.
* **Reimagine.** If we have learned anything from COVID-19, it’s that our systems and policies must protect people, all the time, not just in the event of a crisis. As the world recovers from the pandemic, now is the time to lay the groundwork for building back better.

To kickstart the campaign, two of UNICEF’s valued global partners - **Pandora** and **ING** - have both agreed to pledge a generous donation to show their part in answering the call to this appeal and to spur more donations from the public in the coming weeks.

To support Armenia’s children, UNICEF invites partners, citizens, private sector companies and media to get involved, share, and donate to ensure:

* Provision of test kits
* Medical and hygiene supplies for frontline workers
* Hygiene supplies for preschools and schools.

Donations can be made:

* [Through our website](https://www.unicef.org/armenia/%D5%AB%D5%9E%D5%B6%D5%B9-%D5%AF%D5%A1%D6%80%D5%B8%D5%B2-%D5%A5%D5%BD-%D5%A1%D5%B6%D5%A5%D5%AC-%D5%A4%D5%B8%D6%82)
* Through a direct bank payment to UNICEF: 21700 001-051986-050 (AMD) or 21700 001-051986-150 (USD)

“Now more than ever, we count on you to support our mission for vulnerable children despite these difficult times,” Tanja Radocaj, UNICEF Representative in Armenia.

#TogetherAgainstCoronavirus