

IMPACT

THE UNICEF AUSTRALIA SUPPORTER MAGAZINE

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AUSTRALIA
for every child

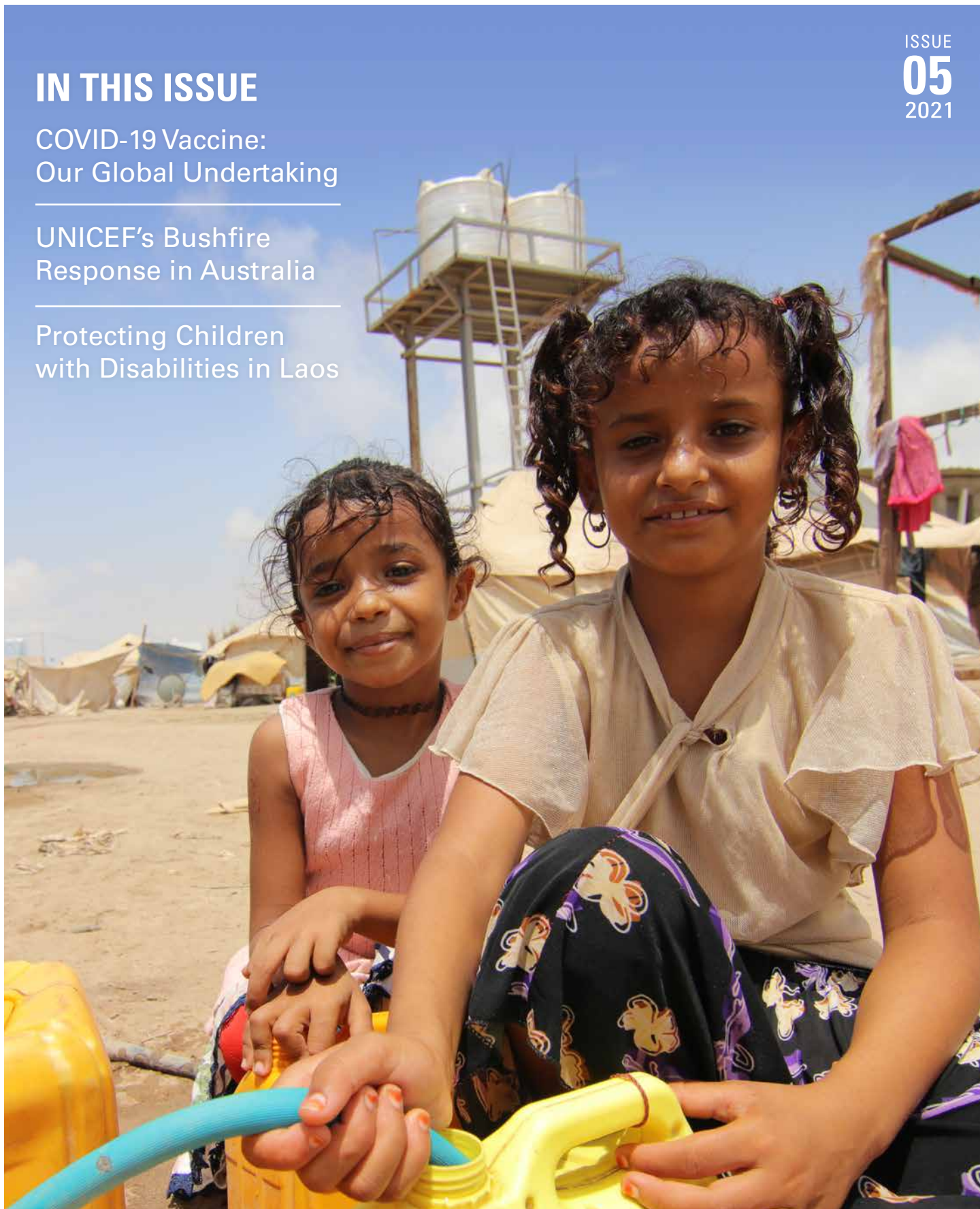
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ISSUE
05
2021



Supplying the fight against COVID-19 worldwide

The COVID-19 pandemic is applying pressure on global manufacturer production capacities and global supply chains. Since the start of the outbreak, UNICEF Supply Division has shipped across 136 countries:



108.4 million

gloves



174.9 million

surgical masks



13 million

N95 masks



4.5 million

gowns



2.2 million

face shields



2.7 million

diagnostics test kits



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ON THE COVER

Muna, 10 years old, collects clean drinking water for her family in a camp for internally displaced people in Yemen. Her school is currently closed and she says her main focus is staying safe from COVID-19 and flooding in the camp. In November, UNICEF raised the alarm bell of a looming famine and today over 24 million people, including more than 11 million children, are in dire need of food, medical treatment, education, water and sanitation. ©UNICEF/UNI324049

THIS PAGE

In April 2020, UNICEF Nigeria receives a delivery of vital health supplies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. UNICEF/UNI322101



EDITORIAL

Tony Stuart, CEO

2020 has been a seminal year for children and young people all over the world and here at home.

UNICEF Australia invited supporters to help us respond to the Black Summer Bushfires, raising a total of \$1,765,009 in 2020. To date we have invested \$1,482,573 in direct community programs. These funds have been helping children get back to school and expanding our mental health initiatives and youth participation programs in 2021.

The year was turned upside down again when news of the Coronavirus pandemic emerged, just as the bushfires ended. **When a devastating pandemic coincides with conflict, climate change, disaster and displacement, the consequence is a child rights emergency depriving children of their health and wellbeing.** As such UNICEF globally has issued its largest ever emergency funding appeal to reach more than 190 million children, a 35% increase in requested funds from 2020.

The response from the Australian community, particularly children and

young people who got behind the COVID-19 health precautions, has been nothing short of magnificent.

Our own ambassadors like The Wiggles spread personal hygiene and social distancing messages that we are so familiar to delivering overseas. Credit must be given to Australian children and families for recognising they could protect their families and grandparents.

Many challenges have tested all of us through 2020 but as we enter 2021 there is news which gives us enormous hope.

It has been over 50 years since the first polio vaccine was introduced in Australia saving thousands of children from life-threatening illnesses and disability as adults, and next year will be just as significant.

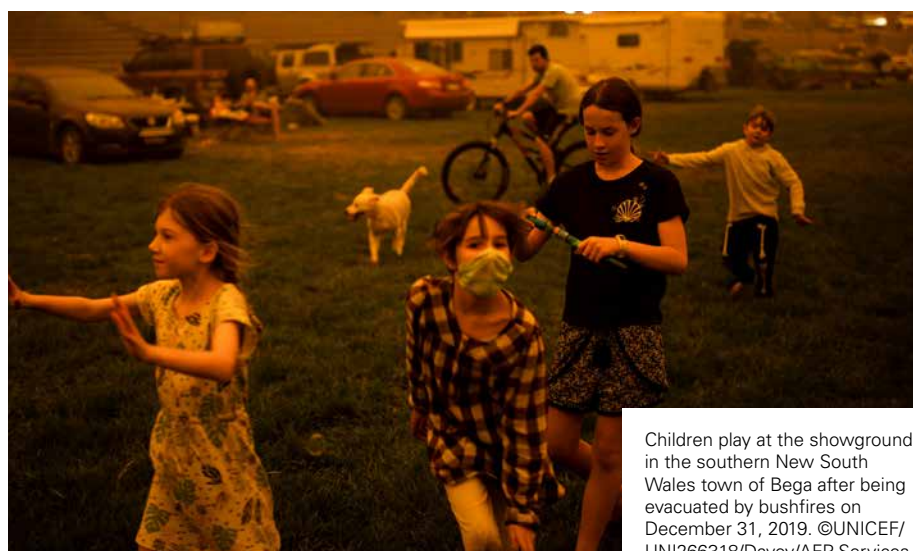
2021 will see UNICEF lead the supply and distribution of the largest and fastest vaccination effort the world has

ever seen, and as the world's largest organisation working for children's rights we won't stop until every child is safe from the threat of this pandemic.

We will also continue to work with the Australian government and governments in the region in the rollout of the COVID vaccine and we are tremendously hopeful that in 2021 we can not only protect children but help ensure they also thrive.

We remain committed and are grateful for all your support as we continue to strive towards our vision that every child has a fair chance.

Tony Stuart
Chief Executive

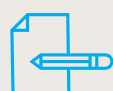


Children play at the showgrounds in the southern New South Wales town of Bega after being evacuated by bushfires on December 31, 2019. ©UNICEF/UNI266318/Davey/AFP-Services

NEWS UPDATES



Routine immunisation services for children have been disrupted in more than 60 countries.



A quarter of a billion students worldwide are still affected by COVID-19 school closures.



The conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia has left 2.8 million people in urgent need of assistance.



March 2021 will mark 10 years of conflict in Syria and six years of conflict in Yemen, leaving nearly 17 million children in need of humanitarian assistance in these two countries alone.



ABOVE

Ms Nang supporting 8-year-old Kum to use the bamboo parallel walking bars as part of his rehabilitation exercises to improve his ability to walk. 2019/UNICEF Lao PDR/Sanoubane

OPPOSITE

Rice fields in Saravan province, Lao.
© UNICEF/UN0311138/Labrador

LAOS: A new model for the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities

BY ADRIAN DE GIOVANNI, INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS MANAGER, UNICEF AUSTRALIA

The Situation

In Laos, children with a disability are often kept at home and sometimes “hidden” to the outside world, largely due to stigma, discrimination and shame. Health, education and social services are not commonly available to them, which exacerbates isolation and limits their opportunity to learn and develop like other children in their community. **Worldwide, children with a disability are four times more likely to suffer abuse and exploitation and seven times more likely to suffer sexual abuse.** Although there is limited national data, it is likely that children with a disability in Laos are subject to a comparable level of abuse, considering the overall weak protection mechanisms and services.

UNICEF Australia's Support

But this is changing thanks to a project supported by UNICEF Australia, which is piloting the ‘first ever’ model of support for children with a disability in the country. The model is an adaption of the barefoot social worker approach used in China, which was observed

by Laos government officials during a 2018 exposure visit, also supported by UNICEF Australia. Under the overall guidance of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the model aims to establish a network of community-based support and assistance which meet the individual needs of children and families, while fostering links to district and provincial government and services. A key feature of the model is strengthening and modernising data collection, which is crucial to enable regular fine-tuning and adjustments of the model and development of more effective national policies and strategies.

The Program Model

- Early identification of disability – essential for ensuring that, from the outset, children and families have access to the services and support they need.
- Training for parents of children with a disability - enabling them to understand the rights of their children, basic rehabilitation techniques to improve their well-being and quality of life, and what services are available.
- Coordinators at the village-level - conducting regular home visits to monitor, support and guide parents, collect relevant data and establish links with available services (for example, clinical, schooling, social welfare).
- Government-led technical teams at the district and provincial levels - providing support and guidance to the village coordinators, ensuring that services and referrals are relevant, of high quality and adapted to the needs and priorities of each child and family.



- National government - providing oversight, developing and coordinating strategies and approaches, and using lessons-learned and 'first ever' data on disability from the project to inform national policy and strategy development.

The Change

The model, which is still in its initial phase, saw the first direct beneficiaries in 2020, including 106 children with disabilities (62 boys and 44 girls) and 130 parents. The model is truly game-changing not only because it is the first in Laos and constitutes the foundation for a model of care and protection which will be ultimately extended to the entire country, but also because it is shifting

perceptions around disability. Stigma, discrimination and shame are already decreasing in the targeted villages. Children with a disability are less isolated, are progressively attending school and have an improved quality of life. Having a solid family and community support and services network also decreases their vulnerability to abuse and exploitation, especially given that all sectors (education, justice, police, health, social welfare) are involved in the model and are now aware of protection risks and strategies. Additionally, parents are less overwhelmed and can dedicate more time to competing priorities, such as caring for their other children, household income and personal well-being.



Kum, 8 years old, was not able to sit and could barely crawl due to his disability (CP Hemiplegia RT - Post Anoxic Cerebrale). He was isolated from other children and the broader community and his mother, Ms Nang, was struggling to work and care for her other children as her days were dedicated entirely to assisting Kum. Through the Project, Ms Nang could learn how to perform basic home-based rehabilitation exercises while also having access to clinical support and guidance. Not only can Kum now sit and almost walk independently, he is also attending school and engaging with other children his age. Ms Nang has now time to work and contribute to the family's income, which is expected to assist exiting a cycle of poverty which had exacerbated the situation. Ms Nang told project staff, with a smile:

"BEFORE I WAS REALLY WORRIED ABOUT KUM'S FUTURE, AND WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO HIM IF MYSELF OR MY HUSBAND PASSED AWAY, BUT NOW I HAVE HOPE"

2020's Untold Stories of Children

From the threat of climate change and environmental disasters, to the global COVID-19 pandemic, outbreaks of Ebola, measles and polio, and brutal violence in countries including Afghanistan, Yemen, Nigeria and Ethiopia, 2020 has been a difficult year for children and young people around the world. Not only have they had to deal with pandemic induced isolation and fear but they've seen the pandemic compound existing issues and inequalities within their communities and reap havoc on health systems, educational systems and economies leaving many of their futures incredibly uncertain.

Despite it all, they have continued to stun us with their resilience and even managed to enjoy incredible moments of hope, joy and solidarity. As we speed towards the new year UNICEF teams continue to work tirelessly to protect and care for children living in some of the most challenging corners of the world. Let's take a look back to the year's untold stories about children.



TIMOR LESTE

On 14 April 2020, a boy reads as his grandmother looks on in Timor-Leste. The book is part of a series of audio-visual and printed material produced by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF to help children continue learning in line with the school curriculum during ongoing school closures in response to COVID-19.

© UNICEF/UNI320756/Soares





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CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Children attending classes in Toumodi-Sakassou, in the centre of Côte d'Ivoire. Due to COVID-19, schools around the world were closed for several weeks or even several months meaning that millions upon millions of children missed out on education and social interaction. When classes started again, UNICEF was there with the necessary measures to keep children safe. Masks, handwashing points, thermometers and social distancing guidelines have allowed children in most countries to get back to learning, safely.

© UNICEF/UNI333571/Dejongh

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SYRIA

A Syrian woman, who was stranded following the closure of the border due to the COVID-19 pandemic, waits with a child to cross into Iraqi Kurdistan from the Syrian side of the Semalka border crossing in north eastern Syrian Arab Republic in July 2020. The pandemic has worsened protracted emergencies throughout the world and March 2021 will mark 10 years of conflict in Syria.

© UNICEF/UNI364612/Souleiman/AFP



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LEBANON

A young woman sits amidst the rubble in her damaged house in Beirut on August 6, 2020, two days after a massive explosion shook the Lebanese capital leaving at least 100 people dead and more than 4,000 injured. The blast destroyed and damaged buildings across the city, leaving some 300,000 people without homes and could not have come at a worse time for Lebanon's children and families. Even before the impact of COVID-19, families were struggling in the face of a rapidly devaluing currency, job losses and rapid inflation, together with daily power cuts, a lack of safe drinking water and limited public healthcare.

© UNICEF/UNI357042/Baz/AFP



Delivery of wellbeing activities to a preschool group in a bushfire affected community @ RoyalFarWest/2020

Drought, bushfires and COVID-19

How UNICEF Australia and its partners have been supporting communities in Australia affected by the triple crisis

A year of extreme and cumulative stress has taken a significant toll on the well-being of Australian communities – particularly our youngest citizens and those living in rural and remote locations. The start of 2020 was met with bushfires burning across the country. By 31 March, more than 5.5 million hectares had been burned, more than 2,000 houses destroyed and 25 lives lost in New South Wales alone. In addition, many communities were still suffering from ongoing droughts. As many Australians battled with the financial and emotional strain of these crises, the pandemic struck.

In February 2020 we launched our first ever domestic emergency response in support of communities affected by the bushfires. Initially our focus was on providing support to children and families who had been severely affected by the fires, and we worked together with local partners to provide support to 3,715 children. This has included provision of essential school items such as uniforms, school bags, stationery and other support needed to return to school and be ready to learn. As the 2021 school year commences, we will provide

additional support to another 1,600 students through this program. We have also introduced a community grant program linked to 77 schools in bushfire and drought affected communities helping them to adapt to life under COVID-19.

The experience of previous natural disasters including the Black Saturday fires provides evidence of the need to ensure children can access specialised support to rebuild their lives. In rural communities there can be limited access to mental health services. Therefore, UNICEF Australia is working in partnership with leading Australian

organisations including the Australian National University, Royal Far West and Good Grief to design and deliver a customized Children's Mental Health and Psychosocial support program across 25 bushfire affected communities. Program activities include therapeutic group work with children and training for adults working with children. Parenting webinars have also been offered as a support for parents and caregivers during these difficult times.

The generous support of corporate partners including MMG Ltd and the Commonwealth Bank of Australia has enabled us to further extend this support and design customized programs to provide similar support to two badly affected regions in Victoria, including over 1000 children and community members in East Gippsland. We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of our donors and corporate partners, which allows UNICEF Australia to give children, families, and communities the tools they need to overcome this unimaginable tragedy.

At the same as we have been busy ensuring that communities can access specialised support, we have also been listening to young people across Australia. In 2020 we have listened to over 2,492 young people and made sure that their perspectives are heard by decision makers during the pandemic. We continue to advocate with government partners to ensure that the needs of children are prioritised as Australia builds back from these crises.

Despite the intense challenges presented by these multiple crises we have been struck by the strength and resilience of young Australians throughout 2020. It is critical that their voices continue to be heard and their needs are prioritised.

The Bushfire Recovery team about to embark on their flight to a rural community. UNICEF Australia's partner, Royal Far West, has joined forces with the charity Little Wings to ensure the team are able to deliver face-to-face support services to regional communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. @ RoyalFarWest/2020



COVID-19 Vaccine: Our global undertaking

BY ALICE HALL, COVID-19 VACCINE LEAD, UNICEF AUSTRALIA

As we begin 2021, the world is looking towards the introduction of vaccines against COVID-19, and what this might mean for bringing an end to the acute phase of this global pandemic. For UNICEF, this year is set to hold what is likely to be the largest and fastest operation to procure and supply vaccines ever seen, and we've been preparing for months.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought complex global and local challenges. Beyond the direct health impacts and the sheer number of cases, children, families and communities have grappled with impacts on the economy and reduced access to health, education and social protection services. The pandemic has halted or reversed progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, and it won't be truly over for anyone until it's over for everyone.

As such, ensuring the safe, effective and equitable roll out of a COVID-19 vaccine is a global priority, and that is why the COVAX Facility was established. COVAX - co-led by the World Health Organization, CEPI (Coalition of Epidemic Preparedness

and Innovation) and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance – has worked over 2020 and into 2021 to accelerate the development and manufacture of safe, effective COVID-19 vaccines, and to ensure fair and equitable access to these vaccines for every country in the world.

As the world's single largest purchaser of vaccines, already purchasing and distributing over two billion doses of vaccines reaching almost half the world's children every year, UNICEF is perfectly placed to play a key role in this process. In collaboration with the PAHO (Pan American Health Organization) Revolving Fund, UNICEF is leading the procurement and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines for 92 low- and lower middle-income countries and supporting procurement for over 90 self-financing upper-middle- and high-income countries.

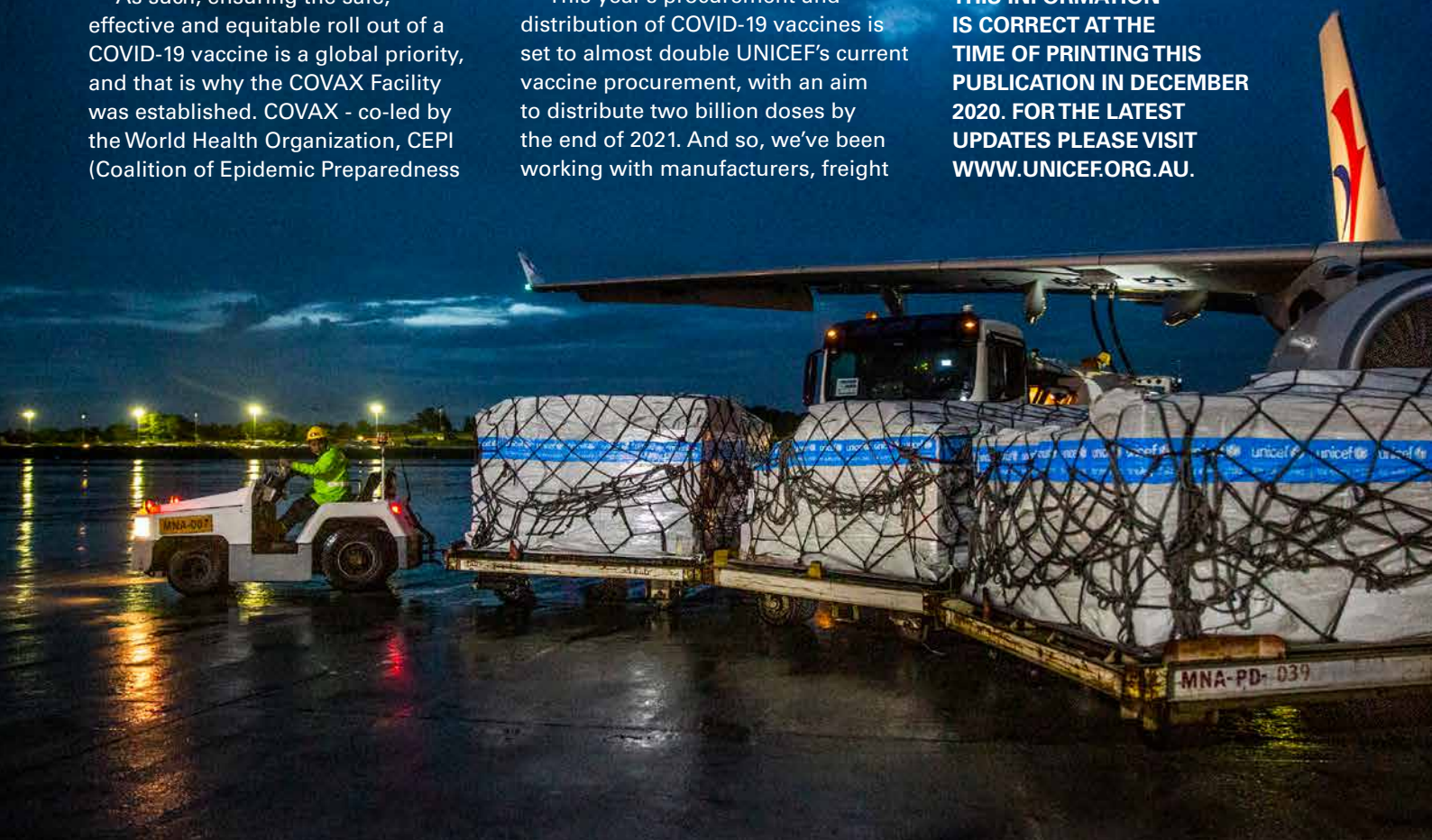
This year's procurement and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines is set to almost double UNICEF's current vaccine procurement, with an aim to distribute two billion doses by the end of 2021. And so, we've been working with manufacturers, freight

companies and global airlines to ensure that everything is in place for the vaccines to reach even the hardest to reach communities.

But preparations for vaccine introduction haven't stopped there. UNICEF is working with partners to ensure that each and every country is ready to introduce this vaccine safely and effectively. Increasing cold chain storage, such as fridges and vaccine carriers, training for health workers and ensuring communities have access to timely, accurate and trustworthy information are all essential parts of UNICEF's work to ensure a COVID-19 vaccine can achieve its ultimate goal.

The global roll out of a vaccine against COVID-19 is a mammoth exercise at an unprecedented scale. It requires all hands on deck, and UNICEF is proud to play a leading role in ensuring that this can take place quickly, safely, effectively and equitably, to protect children and families from the ongoing impacts of this devastating pandemic.

COVAX IS A FAST-MOVING PART OF UNICEF'S WORK. THIS INFORMATION IS CORRECT AT THE TIME OF PRINTING THIS PUBLICATION IN DECEMBER 2020. FOR THE LATEST UPDATES PLEASE VISIT WWW.UNICEF.ORG.AU.





FIELD WORKER PROFILE

Katheryn Bennett

UNICEF's humanitarian workers, like Kathryn Bennett from Hobart, Tasmania, are at the heart of everything we achieve for children. Kathryn has worked in Southeast Asia for over 20 years and is currently UNICEF's Chief of Education in Cambodia. Here, in four answers, she tells us what that actually means!

How would you describe your job to an eight-year-old?

My job is helping teachers, school principals, and the Government of Cambodia to make schools welcoming places for all children, so they can learn, no matter where they come from. This also means helping teachers to secure the right resources and knowledge to do their job, as well as, working with parents, communities and students to make learning interesting, fun and valuable.

What is the most satisfying part of your job?

I love visiting schools and meeting students, principals and teachers. It gives me ideas on how to further improve our support to the benefit of Cambodia's children and schools. Being surrounded by students, hearing their great ideas and seeing their success it is very inspiring!

Do you have an example of UNICEF making a difference for kids in Cambodia?

One very memorable moment was visiting a boy with a severe physical disability who, through UNICEF support, was able to access learning assistance at home. The boy later achieved his dream of attending their local school after UNICEF provided him with a mobility device and his teacher with training on inclusive education.

Why UNICEF?

I work for UNICEF because we are able to reach all children, including those in the most remote and vulnerable communities. Our work is driven by principles of equity and inclusion, which are very important to me. It's work I'm proud of.



Children wash their hands in Myanmar, 2020. ©UNICEF Myanmar/2019/N. Zay Htet

Our Priority Programs Results 2017-2020

Here at UNICEF Australia, we are so grateful you've stayed with us through a challenging 2020. Thanks to your generosity, compassion and trust in us, we have reached over 1.5 million boys and girls from 2017 to 2020 with life-saving support through our Priority Programs.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

In Mt Hagen Hospital, UNICEF's focus on newborn care has reduced the death rate of premature or low birth weight babies from 37% in 2018 to only 4% in 2020, thanks to your support.

CAMBODIA

It may not sound it, but in order to effectively address child marriage in places like Ratanakiri Province, we must first understand it's true extent through effective data collection and mapping. As this information is becoming available for the first time, UNICEF is able to action plan correctly in order to give adolescent girls in Cambodia a chance to reach their potential.

MYANMAR

In the last three years we aimed to reach 16,000 children in 190 schools with better access to clean water. We ended up reaching 57,000 children in 315 schools. As our impact grew, so did buy-in from local communities. This fantastic result for children throughout Myanmar is thanks to your support kickstarting this project.

DONOR PROFILE

Alex's Story

ALEX FRASER, UNICEF WATER WALK PARTICIPANT

I first heard about UNICEF's Water Walk during Melbourne's lockdown period over a Zoom catch up with a friend. Initially I thought it was a great opportunity to keep active and motivated during lockdown, while also staying connected to friends who I couldn't see because of restrictions. Staying active has always been important to me as a working mother, especially this year.

Once I started learning more about the issue's children face surrounding access to safe and clean water, the Water Walk became even more meaningful. A 7km walk is a long way for anyone, especially day after day, and we weren't even carrying water. The amount of time this must take away from a child's day is staggering. Comparing this situation to that of my

own children, who only need to walk a couple of metres to our kitchen sink to get fresh water, really spurred me on. It was a good opportunity to raise the issue amongst my friends, family and colleagues, and to be a positive role model for my children, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when health is a priority.

I ended up doing 7kms in seven consecutive days from 1 October, then kept going with as much walking as I could for the month, reaching a total of 274kms. Doing the Water Walk made me realise the lengths some children have to go to just for water - something we take for granted. It was a fantastic way to keep active together, even while apart.



Supporter Council

As a UNICEF supporter, we think your advice is as valuable as your donation. Our newly established Supporter Council is made up of a passionate group of UNICEF supporters who will actively shape our future work and maximise our impact for children.

UNICEF Australia would like to thank our wonderful 2020 Supporter Council who helped select the cover image for this edition of our Impact magazine.







A long exposure picture shows a car commuting on the outskirts of Cooma, NSW, as the sky turns red due to nearby bushfires on January 4, 2020. Up to 3,000 military reservists were called up to tackle Australia's relentless bushfire crisis, as tens of thousands of residents fled their homes amid catastrophic conditions. © UNICEF/UNI266319/Khan/AFP-Services

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