

One UN: Building a Better Future Together

Understanding the impact
of a pandemic on people
in China



UNITED NATIONS
CHINA



Introduction



As an upper-middle income country and the second largest economy in the world, the last months of 2019 saw China marking 40 years since reform and opening, and continuing a transition from rapid economic growth

to a more balanced pursuit of 'high quality development,' including environmental and social sustainability and in ways that aligned with the global 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Introduction

As SARS-nCOV-2 erupted in the first six months of 2020, life is now remarkably different to the world we remember from 2019. As COVID-19 infections spread around the world, countries and communities have experienced lockdowns, job loss, economic and educational uncertainty, and loss of loved ones and family.

In China, people in Wuhan and eventually across the country took on unprecedented social and movement restrictions as health authorities raced to control a virus with no known treatments or vaccines. The virus has tested the nation's health systems, delayed progress on poverty reduction, and interrupted years of economic growth.

At the same time, throughout this outbreak communities, organizations and individuals have demonstrated resilience, innovation, and community outreach – essential ingredients are enabling the country to withstand the worst shocks of COVID-19 and to begin efforts to build better systems and societies.

From the earliest days of the outbreak, the UN in China has been deeply engaged with our counterparts in government and across

communities in China. Our collaboration has involved direct response to the health crisis, as well as care for vulnerable populations, partnership with employers to ensure safe workplaces, and an eye to agricultural and environmental impacts of the pandemic.

 **Acting as one UN, agencies have been working with our partners across China to Protect Our Health, Care for the Vulnerable, and Build a Better Future.**

Even as China responds to cluster outbreaks and manages the return to economic and social routines, the UN in China is committed to collaborating with government and partners to ensure the post-COVID-19 society leaves no one behind, ensures rights and dignity for all persons, and rebuilds systems and institutions that ensure sustainability and resilience.

It is only in partnership – between individuals, across communities, sectors, and nations – that we will prevail against COVID-19. The UN in China is committed to building a better future, together.

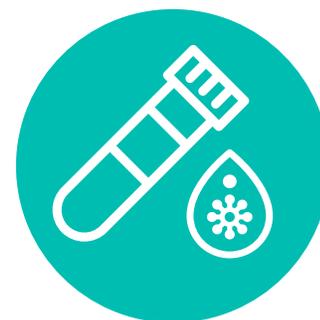
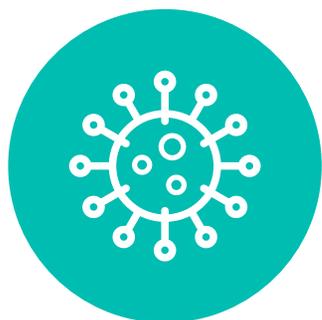
Introduction



Snapshot of an outbreak

Impact on People

between January-June 2020



More than

83,534

people reported
with COVID-19¹

78,479

people recovered
from COVID-19²

90M

people in China
tested for COVID-19³

1. <http://www.nhc.gov.cn/xcs/yqtb/202007/a98e49570be24eaf88de98e6e6217fc8.shtml>

2. <http://www.nhc.gov.cn/xcs/yqtb/202007/a98e49570be24eaf88de98e6e6217fc8.shtml>

3. <https://www.21ic.com/article/815961.html>

Snapshot of an outbreak

Impact on Community



1.73M

fewer new urban jobs were added in the first half of 2020 compared with the same period in 2019⁴



An estimated

180M

children had been out of school or were learning online⁵



Rural migrant workers decreased by

4.96M

in the first half of 2020 compared with the same period in 2019⁶

4. http://www.china.org.cn/china/2020-07/17/content_76281613.htm

5. http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2020-05/15/content_5511824.htm

6. <http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/zhibo1/20200716fbh3/index.htm>

One UN: Protecting our Health



One UN: Protecting our Health

Since early January, as scientists and researchers were racing to determine which virus was causing the outbreak, the UN in China has been a part of the health response. The World Health Organization (WHO) worked closely with Chinese health experts to develop some of the earliest guidance for doctors and hospitals regarding testing and treatment of the virus, develop the first population

One UN: Protecting our Health

communications for personal protection and prevention, and develop guidance for employers, schools, and various sectors to protect against viral transmission.

As the pandemic accelerated, the virus increasingly imposed an additional impact on people who may already struggle to access health services – often women, children and adolescents; people living with HIV or other chronic diseases; and people without regular access to care. The disruption to health systems globally threatens to unwind

decades of progress against maternal and child mortality, HIV, malaria, tuberculosis, noncommunicable diseases, mental health, polio and many other of the most urgent health threats. The indirect detrimental effects of COVID-19 on these groups may be greater than the number of deaths due to the virus itself.

Working together, the UN in China worked to highlight these and other issues affecting our health in China, and to bring these lessons to other countries.



One UN: Protecting our Health

WHO: Mission Summary: Field Visit to Wuhan 20-21 January 2020

<https://www.who.int/china/news/detail/22-01-2020-field-visit-wuhan-china-jan-2020>

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<https://www.who.int/china/news/feature-stories/detail/chinese-emergency-medical-teams-support-covid-19-response>

UNDP/WHO: Workplace safety during COVID-19

<https://undpinchina.exposure.co/workplace-safety-during-covid19>

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<https://www.who.int/china/news/feature-stories/detail/covid-19-a-call-to-address-non-communicable-diseases>

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<https://www.who.int/china/news/feature-stories/detail/covid-19-and-tobacco-its-time-to-fight-for-our-lungs>

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https://www.ilo.org/beijing/information-resources/public-information/WCMS_736744/lang--en/index.htm

One UN: Protecting our Health

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UNAIDS: UNAIDS and WeDoctor organise an experience sharing session on COVID-19 between China and Kenya

https://www.unaids.org/en/20200506_China_Kenya

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<https://www.cn.undp.org/content/china/en/home/presscenter/articles/2020/second-shipment-of-undp-donated-emergency-medical-supplies-arriv.html>

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UNICEF: UNICEF ships 6 metric tons of supplies to support China's response to novel Coronavirus outbreak

<https://www.unicef.cn/en/press-releases/unicef-ships-6-metric-tons-supplies-support-chinas-response-novel-coronavirus>

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<https://www.wfp.org/news/wfp-provides-lifesaving-medical-equipment-supporting-chinas-response-covid-19>

One UN: Caring for the Vulnerable

One UN: Caring for the Vulnerable

The pandemic is so much more than a health crisis. Lives and livelihoods have been lost or upended. Hundreds of millions of people around the world have lost their jobs. Fear and uncertainty abound. Experts report mental health needs at rates previously unseen. The virus preys on gaps in health systems and exploits the vulnerable.

Throughout the pandemic, the UN in China is working with government and partners across the nation to highlight both the needs as well as the people and institutions bridging the gaps, working to protect the vulnerable.



One UN: Caring for the Vulnerable

WHO: Disability considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak (CN)

https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?__biz=MzA3ODU5NDY2NA==&mid=2653937122&idx=1&sn=c8c04fe2a01b2542177076cf8213352b&chksm=849b2ae5b3eca3f33c2784036edac92e20c8d2beefd089dad688e6b33f7a2324f276679371bc&token=1208798363&lang=zh_CN%23rd

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<https://www.who.int/china/news/feature-stories/detail/the-caretaker-buddy-peer-to-peer-support-for-tb-patients>

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https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s?__biz=MzA3ODU5NDY2NA==&mid=2653937220&idx=1&sn=a530cf8b1a85807694059d0282b75f57&chksm=849b2943b3eca055e6795003c51dab0916ea3a72da0f22dec8f0729fa41be671b7f4f76e2c&token=1208798363&lang=zh_CN%23rd

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IFAD: The impact of COVID-19 on smallholders in China

<https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/blog/asset/41949073>

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One UN: Caring for the Vulnerable

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<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/4/feature-rural-women-farmers-join-the-fight-against-covid-19-in-china>

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UNAIDS: UNAIDS is working with partners in China to ensure that HIV services continue during the novel coronavirus outbreak

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https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/pressreleaseandstatementarchive/2020/february/20200218_china_covid19

UNAIDS: COVID-19 lockdown in Wuhan: Community group delivers HIV medicine

https://www.unaids.org/en/20200608_Wuhan_video

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<https://china.unfpa.org/en/news/20050501>

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<https://china.unfpa.org/en/statement/20030801>

UNICEF: UNICEF publishes weekly parenting tips to support children's psychosocial needs during the COVID-19 pandemic

<https://www.unicef.cn/en/social-emotional-learning-on-wechat>

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WFP: WFP supports smallholder farmers in the rural areas of Anhui and Gansu to recover from the disruption of production and build resilience (CN)

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One UN: Building a Better Future

One UN: Building a Better Future

The pandemic is a reminder of the delicate balance between people and prosperity, between education today and the economies of tomorrow, between systems that drain resources and those that sustain them.

Any effort to make our world safer and more resilient against future outbreaks will require addressing the systems and institutions around which we build our communities. Returning to the “old normal” guarantees a return to the same challenges of inequity, of exclusion, and of scarcity. It is only in rebuilding our institutions in innovative ways that we can build a new pathway to security, prosperity and peace. This includes applying digital innovation in a robust way that expands access, eliminating discrimination in social

responses, expanding access to those with disabilities, and strengthening educational opportunities for future employees.



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WHO: What can digital health offer for COVID-19? Lessons from China

<https://www.who.int/china/news/feature-stories/detail/covid-19-and-digital-health-what-can-digital-health-offer-for-covid-19>

WHO: The disaster reminds us again: Mental health is a health service that cannot be ignored (CN)

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IFAD: A call for proposals to support post-COVID-19 food security and resilience through South-South and Triangular Cooperation

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<https://www.cn.undp.org/content/china/en/home/ourperspective/ourperspectivearticles/2020/world-must-work-together-to-defy-the-consequences-of-coronavirus.html>

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UNEP: COVID-19 and the nature trade-off paradigm

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UNEP: Op-ed: Let's not return to the 'old normal'

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UNEP: Waste Management during the COVID-19 Pandemic: from response to recovery

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UNESCO: On-line Training Resources from Category 2 Centers in Natural Sciences in China

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UNICEF: Five recommendations when parents return to work

<https://www.unicef.cn/en/videos/five-recommendations-when-parents-return-to-work>

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UNIDO: Guidelines for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises: Business Recovery in the Wake of COVID-19 Pandemic

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<https://www.unv.org/Success-stories/Advancing-sustainable-development-through-South-South-cooperation>

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One UN: Joining Voices to Communicate about COVID-19

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The COVID-19 outbreak communications challenge began in January 2020 with efforts to advise and inform the public in China on the novel coronavirus – at a time when scientific knowledge about the virus was still extremely limited. Early communications to the public regarding steps they could take to protect themselves and their loved ones was essential to both dramatically reduce viral transmission as well as address the anxiety and fears associated with a new virus.

Before COVID-19 emerged, the more than two dozen UN agencies operating in China had worked to deliver strategic, effective, and coordinated communications directly to the public and to counterparts in China. The UN communications group leveraged the changing communications landscape, especially the rise of social media, to engage as One UN in direct

dialogue with the people, communities, civil social and governments across China.

Responding to COVID-19, the UN communications group worked to jointly promote and enhance messaging on personal protective behaviors, working from home, and targeted guidance on COVID-19. As the outbreak expanded, the group worked to expand its voice to address the rise in discrimination and stigma associated with COVID, continued engagement around healthy and safe workplaces, and how to reach minority communities.

One UN: Joining Voices to Communicate about COVID-19

WHO/UN China: Collaborating with the UN system in China: building our way to a new normal under COVID-19

<https://www.who.int/china/activities/collaborating-with-the-un-system-in-china-building-our-way-to-a-new-normal-under-covid-19>

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