



Panama City, 29 April 2020

Dear colleagues,

We hope that you and your families are well and healthy as you stay and deliver during these difficult times.

Amid COVID-19 emergency now activated at the L-3 level, we are writing you a joint message to encourage you to strengthen collaboration and joint work between UNICEF and WFP teams in the ground in Latin America and the Caribbean. We invite you to accelerate efforts to implement jointly where possible, and enhance coordination of our technical assistance to governments and partners in line with our common priorities, with a special focus on the following programme areas:

1. **Social Protection:** In line with the programmes put in place by the majority of the governments in the region, invest in and strengthen the national social protection systems and programmes to respond to the current crisis in the short term, and to mitigate the impact of the health and socio-economic crisis on the social fabric in the medium and long terms. Continuous/adapted access to the essential services for the affected populations and social protection of the most vulnerable are priorities in this regard.
2. **School-based Programmes:** Ensure universal access to education and promote school feeding as a platform to improve the health and nutrition of children and adolescents, and mitigate loss of access to healthy food for poor families. We encourage you to promote the *Back to School* global campaign in your countries.
3. **Nutrition:** Support nutrition and early childhood development services to prevent maternal and infant undernutrition, and foster caring environment during the health emergency, as well as strengthen coordination platforms at national and regional levels, such as GRIN-LAC.
4. **Capacity Strengthening, public Advocacy and communication for development:** Promote healthy eating habits and support governments to regulate obesogenic environments through a systems' approach (food system, health system, education system, and social protection system).
5. **Programme Implementation:** Focus on the most vulnerable populations including women. Children, migrants, rural and peri-urban poor, people with disabilities, and indigenous communities, with the aim of leaving no one behind.

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6. Supply Chain: Strengthen joint coordination and support to WHO and Ministries of Health as part of the COVID-19 response. Promote Common Cash Statement and Long-Term Agreements (LTA) Sharing between WFP, UNICEF, and other UN partners.
7. Communications: Produce multimedia content for different audiences - including beneficiaries, media outlets and donors- to raise awareness about key programmatic areas, data and messages linked to our response. Cross reference online to promote our collaboration.

In this pursuit, we encourage you to develop joint work plans, advocacy and resource mobilization strategies. We are strengthening coordination at the regional levels to provide advice and support to you in these joint undertakings. We look forward to being timely informed of advances and receiving your plans to enhance UNICEF-WFP cooperation to respond to COVID-19 emergency by 20 May.

We are confident that you will strive to set aside all turf-related considerations and attitudes with the aim of staying the course of a joint agenda of joint work and collaboration supported by regular engagements and meetings within the overall framework of the UNCTs, led by the UN Resident Coordinators. Through mutual support, open doors and effective field level delivery, WFP and UNICEF are bound to make a significant positive impact on the livelihoods of vulnerable communities.

In doing so, we demonstrate our commitments to the calls of our Executive Directors to achieve more together in 2020 and step up to the Secretary General's appeal for global solidarity and shared responsibility in these challenging times. We count on your support in making this possible.



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