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**Reporting Period: 18-30 April 2020**

# West and Central Africa Region

## COVID-19 Situation Report No. 2

United Nations Population Fund



### Highlights

- Two months after the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Nigeria on 27 February 2020, the West and Central Africa region is seeing a significant increase in cases and deaths.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) Africa region indicates that the region accounts for 54% of cases and 35% of deaths in Africa.
- Five countries have surpassed 1,000 confirmed cases, with cases in Guinea and Nigeria increasing most rapidly.
- Countries continue to face a risk of increased community transmission. Eight countries are reporting community transmissions to date.
- If this trend continues, the number of cases could double each week, according to WHO.
- UNFPA is partnering with governments, other UN agencies and organisations to address COVID-19. It is an active member of various regional coordination mechanisms (including COVID-19 Regional Response Platform, the UN Sustainable Development Group, Harmonization of Health in Africa, and the Inter-Agency Steering Committee and the.)
- The UN framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19 was released this week.
- The key national challenges identified by the UN country teams and humanitarian coordination teams include: Weak national health systems and coordination for some countries; insufficient financial resources to fund national response plans; weak capacity and insufficient number of health personnel; insufficient personal protection equipment (PPE) for health personnel; insufficient ventilators for increasing severe cases; and low screening and testing capacity.
- Mass testing strategies need to be put in place to enable economic recovery, but lack of equipment and training remains an issue. The consequences are greater in humanitarian contexts.

### Situation in Numbers

 **11,880** Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

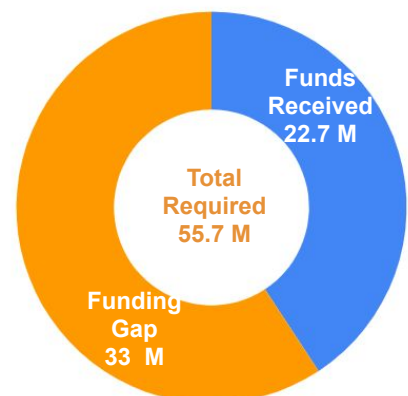
 **297** COVID-19 Deaths

Source: WHO April 30, 2020

### Key Population Groups

-  **13 M** Pregnant Women
-  **108 M** Women of Reproductive Age
-  **148 M** Young People (age 10-24)
-  **13 M** Older Persons (age 65+)

### Funding Status for Region (US\$)



## Regional Response Summary

The UNFPA response in the region aligns with the [UN framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19](#), the 2030 Agenda, the 2020 WHO Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Global Humanitarian Response Plan and the UNFPA COVID-19 Global Response Plan.

UNFPA regional office is working to:

- **Promote advocacy and policy dialogue focused at the regional level** on the development of appropriate strategies regarding access to reproductive health and family planning services, including prevention and response to GBV, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is in collaboration with regional and sub-regional organisations, civil society organisations, international institutions and donors;
- **Strengthen the capacity of UNFPA Country Offices** to build skills, systems and resources, as well as provide technical expertise adapted to COVID-19 context;
- **Facilitate the systematic sharing and management of knowledge on good practices and innovative solutions** to improve UNFPA's response to the COVID-19, based on lessons learned;
- **Strengthen regional partnerships and coordination**, including south-south and triangular cooperation, and inter-agency humanitarian coordination to respond to COVID-19 in the region; and
- **Monitor the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of the interventions by country offices** in the COVID-19 context, as well as provide technical, programmatic and operational support so that they can achieve expected results.

### Coordination

UNFPA is a member of country and regional structures including a COVID-19 Regional Response Platform, UN country team, the UN Sustainable Development Group, Inter-Agency Steering Committee and the Harmonization of Health in Africa. Discussions are underway to propose a holistic plan for integrated UN support to countries in the region.

UNFPA is Acting Chair of the Regional UN Sustainable Development Group for West and Central Africa, working to bring stakeholders together for a coherent response to the pandemic. The region is [drawing from lessons learned from its Ebola experience to address COVID-19](#).

The regional coordination platform for COVID-19 is facilitated by WHO and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and comprises six sub-groups: (i) operational coordination; (ii) risk communication and community engagement; (iii) epidemiological surveillance, entry points and laboratory; (iv) case management and infection prevention and control; (v) rapid response teams; and (vi) logistics and operational support.

### Continuity of SRH interventions, including protection of health workforce

UNFPA continues to support SRH interventions by:

- Documenting and sharing best practices and lessons learned from previous health crises, including Ebola. This will contribute to the ongoing efforts of the UN system and other stakeholders, in areas such as surveillance, early detection, contact tracing and overall prevention;
- Advocating for the continuity of SRH services, considering that several countries were already in humanitarian situations before the pandemic;
- Providing technical support to national partners to adapt programmes to the current needs of the pandemic; and
- Coordinating with national and regional bodies, including playing a leadership role within the One-UN approach on the ground.

### Country examples:

- **Central African Republic:** Supported the government's fight against COVID-19 by donating 70 hand washing kits, 3,900 gloves, 6,900 masks, and 4,489 tablets of soap to 48 health centres, 10 women's houses and 12 youth centres in Bangui, Bimbo and Negoua.
- **Niger:** Provided equipment and dignity kits to the Defense and Security Forces.
- **Senegal:** Provided personal protective equipment and food stuff to the Mayor of Fass, as part of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Regional Response Summary (continued)

### Addressing GBV

UNFPA is addressing GBV by:

- Working closely with WHO, the West African Health Organization, the African Society for Infectious Diseases, OCHA and other UN partner agencies, international NGOs and national government authorities to provide technical advice on GBV and support planning efforts in response to COVID-19; and
- Engaging with countries to focus on high-profile interventions, such as the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend initiative; Muskoka initiative on maternal, newborn and child health; and the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women in the context of the COVID-19, and agree on key activities to be implemented immediately.

### Risk communication and community engagement, including youth engagement

UNFPA is an active member in the Risk Communication and Community Engagement working group across all countries in the region. Co-led by UNICEF and WHO, UNFPA is working collaboratively with other actors to engage various communities and stakeholders to raise awareness on COVID-19 preparedness and response.

Other organisations include: Action Contre La Faim, ActionAid, Alianza por la Solidaridad, ALIMA, Bioforce, CARE, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Federation of the Red Cross, UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Heifer International, INTERSOS, International Refugee Commission, Médecins du Monde, Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), Norwegian Refugee Commission, UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, International Organization of Migration, Organisation Ouest Africaine de la Santé, Oxfam, Plan International, Save the Children, UN High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR, UN Women, Water Aid, and World Vision.

UNFPA participates in planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of risk communication and community engagement activities in the context of a joint response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the WCA region.

### Country examples

- **Senegal:** Supporting girls' clubs at the community level to install 247 washing points (commonly called *tipi tapa*) to promote hand washing in their villages.
- **Guinea Bissau:** Partnering with the Ubuntu Guinea-Bissau Academic to reach a youth network of over 1,000 people to raise awareness about COVID-19.



UNFPA, FAO and UN Women are jointly supporting the government of Senegal to respond to COVID-19 by contributing 450 million West African CFA franc to improve food security and resilience of vulnerable families.

## Media & Communications

UNFPA country offices in WCA are actively engaged, alongside other UN agencies and stakeholders, in media outreach to raise awareness, share guidance and showcase achievements.

In its capacity as Acting Chair of the Regional Sustainable Development Group for West and Central Africa, UNFPA Regional Director held a virtual press conference with other [UN agencies to draw attention to Africa to support government's' response to the COVID-19 pandemic](#). H.E. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel, and Head of UNOWAS, gave the opening remarks.

Meanwhile, in Ghana, UNFPA joined other agencies in the UN system to launch a campaign to create awareness on preventing domestic violence and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

In Senegal, UNFPA, the UN Food and Agricultural Organization and UN Women jointly supported the government's response to COVID-19 by contributing 450 million CFA franc [to improve food security and enhance the resilience of families vulnerable to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

UNFPA's response efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic are highlighted through many channels, including in this interview with the Regional Director: [How We Are Responding To Pandemic Fight - United Nations](#).

Through the Regional UN Sustainable Development Group in West and Central Africa, the Regional Director, as Acting Chairperson, has been advocating for a community-based approach to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. [Africa: Expediting a community-based response to COVID-19 pandemic in West and Central Africa](#).

### Ghana

- [UN Campaign on ending SGBV in the COVID-19 Era in Ghana](#)
- [Addressing SGBV challenges in the COVID-19 era](#)

### Senegal

- [450 Millions de FCFA \(USD 745.000\) de FAO, ONUFEMMES et UNFPA pour soutenir l'initiative conjointe « le panier de la ménagère »](#)
- [Les jeunes filles installent des points de lavage dans les villages pour lutter contre le COVID 19](#)

### Burkina Faso

- [UNFPA dans la riposte face au COVID-19 au Burkina Faso](#)
- [Lutte contre le COVID-19 : les jeunes multiplient les initiatives de sensibilisation](#)

### Guinea Bissau

- [UNFPA and Ubuntu Guinea-Bissau Academy launch remote awareness campaign via telephone against COVID-19](#)
- [UNFPA supports Guinea-Bissau's response to COVID-19](#)

### Liberia

- [UNFPA Donates US\\$400K Assorted Medical Supplies and Equipment to Liberian Government](#)
- [Epi-surveillance and contact tracing key to breaking COVID-19 transmission in Liberia](#)

### Togo

- [eConvivial : Une Application sponsorisée par UNFPA Togo dans la lutte contre le COVID-19 au Togo](#)

### Nigeria

- [Implementing planned activities during COVID-19](#)
- [I am staying home for you. Are you doing the same? – Covid19 is real and the best prevention is to stay at home.](#)



## Annex: Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in WCARO (WHO, 30 April 2020)

Country	Confirmed Cases	Deaths
Benin	69	2
Burkina Faso	638	42
Cameroon	1,806	59
Cabo Verde	113	1
Central African Republic	50	0
Chad	52	2
Congo	220	9
Côte d'Ivoire	1,238	14
Equatorial Guinea	315	1
Gabon	276	3
Gambia	11	1
Ghana	1,671	16
Guinea	1,351	7
Guinea-Bissau	77	1
Liberia	141	16
Mali	482	25
Mauritania	7	1
Niger	713	32
Nigeria	1,532	44
São Tomé and Príncipe	11	0
Senegal	882	9
Sierra Leone	116	5
Togo	109	7
<b>Total WCARO</b>	<b>11,880</b>	<b>297</b>

Confirmed Cases by Country and Region

Region ● APRO ● ASRO ● EECARO ● ESARO ● LACRO ● WCARO

