Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

As of 16 April, 50 cases have been confirmed in Guinea-Bissau in three regions: 32 (64%) in the capital, Bissau, 13 (26%) in Cacheu and 5 (10%) in Biombo. Out of the 50 confirmed cases, 31 are male (62%) and 19 are female (38%). The most attained age group is between 25 and 34 years and constitutes 40% of the cases.

The National Health Emergency Committee, under the Ministry of Health, continues to lead the response, supported by the UN system and other partners like Médecins Sans Frontieres. The Committee holds daily coordination meetings, as well as daily briefings to the press and the general public about the outbreak.

In addition, to prevent the spread of the disease, the national authorities have declared the State of Emergency closing schools, restaurants and bars, prohibiting gatherings and establishing a period from 7h to 12h each day to sell and buy goods in the markets.

In support of the National Contingency Plan, the UN has developed a UN joint COVID-19 Operational Support Plan.

UNICEF’s COVID-19 response

In support to the National Contingency Plan for COVID-19, UNICEF response strategy and interventions focus on the following:

- Risk communication and community engagement and C4D
- WASH and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures;
- Health – Continuous access to health services, capacity strengthening of medical personnel and provision of medical consumables, essential drugs and equipment;
- Education: provision of distance education and support to education sector response and recovery
- Child Protection: Psychosocial support and continuous access to child protection services;
- Procurement and logistics

Health

UNICEF works with the Ministry of Health to ensure continued access to essential health and nutrition services for women, children and vulnerable communities, including immunization, prenatal and postnatal care, HIV care and nutritional services. The network of over 4,000 Community Health Workers is being trained to build their capacity in the sensitization of families about precautionary measures and identification of signs of the infection. The community health workers will help with case identification as they are present in all regions of the country.

WASH

The first 40 communities, out of 960 targeted, have been equipped with handwashing devices and soap and informed on prevention measures to prevent COVID-19, benefitting around 10,000 people.

RCCE/C4D

10 members of the UNICEF-supported young reporters’ network have accompanied and reported on the coronavirus prevention activities being carried out by Red Cross Volunteers to targeted families in the Autonomous Sector of Bissau. The volunteers from the National Red Cross continued the door-to-door sensitizing campaign for coronavirus prevention and mitigation in the capital Bissau, reaching 29,820 people. 648 traditional and religious leaders have been mobilized to sensitize their communities about the prevention of COVID-19. Social media posts on COVID-19 have reached 151,752 people.

Education

Since April 11, UNICEF is partnering with the National television to broadcast the initial distance learning material, focusing on numeracy and literacy. In addition, UNICEF has supported the Ministry of Education in the preparation of an Education Sector Response and Recovery Plan and is working on mobilizing resources for its implementation.
**Child protection**

UNICEF is supporting COVID-19 community awareness activities in 109 communities in the regions of Gabu, Tombali, Oio, Cacheu, Quinara and Autonomous Sector of Bissau, targeting 12,000 people directly, including 3,500 children and adolescents. In addition, 75 community workers and regional coordinators from 5 NGOs, implementing community programmes to end FGM and child marriage, are being provided with hygiene supplies and correct information on COVID-19, including mechanism and approaches to address it at community level. A training of 66 social workers, psychologists and CSOs, on the COVID Response, with a focus on the protection of children including the psychosocial support has been organized on April 16.

**Supplies**

UNICEF has placed the order for medical equipment and supplies for the isolation ward. In addition, 20,000 hand-made masks are being purchased for distribution among the population. UNICEF has procured 10 oxygen concentrators, waiting for arrival in Bissau.

**Adaptations to ongoing UNICEF programmes**

UNICEF development programmes have been adapted to the COVID-19 context by reformulating some activities, by using programme resources to enhance COVID-19 interventions or by adding COVID-19 prevention messages to our current programmes. For example, Community Health Workers are receiving additional training on COVID-19 prevention so that they can support the identification of suspect cases. Interventions to end female genital mutilation continue in communities but have now added COVID-19 prevention messages as part of their advocacy activities. Communities benefitting from Community-Led Total Sanitation to end open defecation, have now seen how the programmes have been enlarged to include messaging for prevention of COVID-19 and the installation of handwashing stations with soap.

**Funding Overview and Partnerships**

The Guinea-Bissau CO has contributed to the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan with a request of USD 2.27 million for preparedness and response needs. UNICEF Guinea-Bissau has redirected $US 200,000 of its own resources to the response. The office also received US$ 70,000 provided by the Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG) from GPE, US$ 67,000 from GAVI and US$ 100,000 from the Regional Office Emergency Fund.

Current resource mobilization efforts include the preparation of funding proposals for COVID-19 Response and Recovery MPTF (US$ 1,000,000), to the GPE COVID-19 Accelerated Funding window (up to US$ 5,000,000) and to reallocation of GAVI Health System Strengthening funds (up to US$ 300,000).

**External Media**


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