



COVID 19 SITREP

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HIGHLIGHTS



NATIONAL SITUATION

As of 31st May 2020, The Gambia reported a total of **25 confirmed** cases of COVID-19, with **19 recoveries** and **1 fatality**. The President on 19 May 2020 extended the State of Public Emergency for 21 days throughout the country and appointed a National Coordinator for COVID-19 Preparedness and Response to coordinate the work of all government ministries, departments and agencies, NGOs and other partners involved in the National COVID-19 response.

REGIONS WITH CONFIRMED CASES



COUNTRY OFFICE RESPONSE ACTIONS



UNFPA supports the government's response mechanism through the National Health Emergency Committee (NHEC) and Co-Chairs the Psychosocial Support sub-committee with the Ministry of Health. UNFPA continues to advocate for addressing Gender-Based Violence during COVID-19 pandemic.

CONTACT TRACING AND SURVEILLANCE



Responding to the Ministry of Health's request for support to strengthen contact tracing and surveillance of COVID-19 in The Gambia, UNFPA Gambia CO presented 10 motorcycles, and helmets to the Ministry of Health. UNFPA The Gambia Country Representative, emphasised that the items will facilitate active contact tracing as early detection and isolation of cases is critical in curbing the transmission of the COVID-19 in our communities. The Honourable Minister of Health, expressed the government's appreciation of UNFPA's support to the country's development agenda and particularly the current support to the National COVID-19 Response Plan.

CONTINUITY OF ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES

UNFPA supported the development of a directive for the use of Regional Health Teams on the continuity of essential maternal health and family planning services. The directive has been shared with all health regions for immediate implementation.

Rapid assessment of health and outreach facilities on the continuum of care and on the possibility of integrating the continuum of care into COVID-19 response has been completed. The assessment is to ensure an understanding of the possible impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of essential health services as well as the level of preparedness of health facilities to guarantee the continued provision of these services. Some of the issues highlighted in the assessment report are:



RCH services are offered in all facilities with social distancing being observed.



All RCH based facilities have hand washing stations



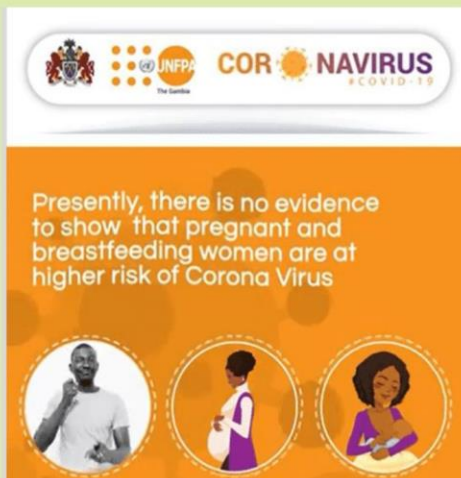
All facilities have been supplied with PPEs



A drop in the uptake of antenatal and post-natal care services has been observed in some facilities.

Community Surveillance and Contact Tracing concept note was developed on tracing contacts at community level with the involvement of young people. Upper River Region, Central River Region and possibly Western Region 1 are identified as possible pilot sites for the community surveillance and contact tracing project with youth volunteers. The Gambia Red Cross Society and National Youth Council have been identified by the Ministry as potential partners.

RISK COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



The Country Office produced short video messaging on basic preventive measures targeting pregnant and lactating mothers to ensure adequate and accurate information about how they can be affected by COVID-19 and on how to protect themselves and their unborn child/baby. Antenatal and postnatal care visit messages were developed to encourage the uptake of maternal health services during this pandemic. The video messages are available in English and the five major local languages (Wolof, Mandinka, Jola, Fula and Sarahule) spoken in the country . [Watch more](#)

Recognizing the important role of religious leaders in shaping public perception in the Gambia, two video messages from a renowned religious leader on preventive measures such as hand washing, staying away from social gathering and congregational prayers and following precautionary measures prescribed by the WHO and the Ministry of Health were produced and uploaded on YouTube and on the Ministry of Health's platforms.

The Country Office has also developed COVID-19 awareness messages for public information. These poster messages have been produced in English and Arabic. 2800 posters have been provided to the Ministry of Health and local government authorities, for distribution in communities around the country.

ADVANCING WOMEN AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING DURING COVID-19 AND BEYOND



ACTIVISTA The Gambia with support from UNFPA through the UN Peacebuilding funded Women and Youth Project, concluded a community Interface Dialogue in three regions aimed at improving the representation and Advancing women and youth participation in decision making during COVID-19 and beyond participation of youth and women in community leadership and decision making structures, and to create awareness on the COVID-19 pandemic. The signs and symptoms of COVID-19, preventive measures, and channels to seek information and medical assistance when required were highlighted during the dialogues. 75 pieces of hand sanitisers and soaps were distributed among the communities to support their COVID-19 response efforts. [Read more](#)

PROVISION OF PSYCHOSOCIAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SUPPORT



The CO co-chairs the national psychosocial support service committee through the Ministries of Health and Women Affairs in the provision of psychosocial support services to people under quarantine and for comprehensive Gender Based Violence support.

1. **27** people with anxiety-related problems received psychosocial support, including psychological first aid and professional counseling
2. Recovered COVID-19 patients and hitherto quarantined individuals were supported to re-integrate with their families upon discharge from treatment and quarantine centres respectively, after an initial refusal to accept them back in their communities
3. PSS hotline is available for health workers, supported by Paradise Foundation
4. COVID-19 hotline number 1025 will be used for psychosocial support and country office communication team will support mass dissemination of the service

UNFPA SUPPORTS QUARANTINED INDIVIDUALS AND WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DIGNITY KITS AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The CO supported the Ministry of Health with 100 dignity kits containing soaps, towels, toilet rolls, toothbrush, toothpaste, sanitary pads, among others for individuals currently under quarantine in the Greater Banjul Areas (GBA). [Read more](#)

ENSURING THE SUPPLY OF MODERN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH COMMODITIES



In partnership with the Gambia Red Cross Society, 300 dignity kits were distributed to women and girls in Basse in the Upper River Region of the country, as experience has shown that the essential needs of women and girls are often and easily neglected during emergencies. Currently, the Country Office has a healthy stock of all the commodities. However, with the interruption of the supply chain due to the COVID-19 pandemic, if we are unable to receive our supplies in the next two months, we will experience stock outs of commodities like Depo Provera. [Read more](#)

CONCLUSION

The UNFPA The Gambia country office will continue to engage and work with the Ministry of Health and other partners to support the National Response and post-recovery to COVID-19 as the pandemic evolves.



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