



Reporting Period: 1 - 30 November 2020

West and Central Africa Region

COVID-19 Situation Report No. 10

United Nations Population Fund



Regional Highlights

- West and Central Africa region records a steady decrease of cases over the last two weeks. The total number of COVID-19 cases has reached over 294,000 in all 23 countries in the region. By 22 December, 4,177 deaths had been recorded. The five countries with highest confirmed caseloads are: Nigeria (78,790), Ghana (53,954), Cameroon (25,849), Côte d'Ivoire (21,932) and Senegal (17,879).
- Health worker infections continue to increase gradually with more than 8,500 infections reported in 22 WCA countries by mid-December. Nigeria remains the most affected, followed by Ghana, Cameroon, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.
- UNFPA is leading life-saving sexual and reproductive health services through the Minimum Initial Service Package for reproductive health in emergencies.
- 111,964 women and youth accessed integrated SRH services in UNFPA-supported facilities in Liberia (62,800), Senegal (42,832), Sierra Leone (3,189), Guinea-Bissau (2,002), and Benin (1,141).
- At least 16,458 safe deliveries were facilitated in UNFPA-supported facilities in Benin (3,647), Guinea-Bissau (114), Senegal (7,779), Sierra Leone (2,330) and Togo (2,588).
- Some 2,960 contact-tracers were trained and deployed with UNFPA support in Burkina Faso (700), Cabo Verde (60), Liberia (447), Niger (92), Senegal (1,661).
- 2,712 contacts were traced with UNFPA support in Chad (50), Gambia (789) and Liberia (1873).
- 2,254 women and girls subjected to violence, including those with disabilities, have accessed essential services (health, social, police and justice) in Burkina Faso (117), Cabo Verde (58), Cameroon (217), Chad (1326), Congo (103) and Togo (433).

Situation in Numbers



294,256 Confirmed COVID-19 Cases



4,177 COVID-19 Deaths

Source: WHO, 22 December 2020

Key Population Groups



13 M Pregnant Women



108 M Women of Reproductive Age

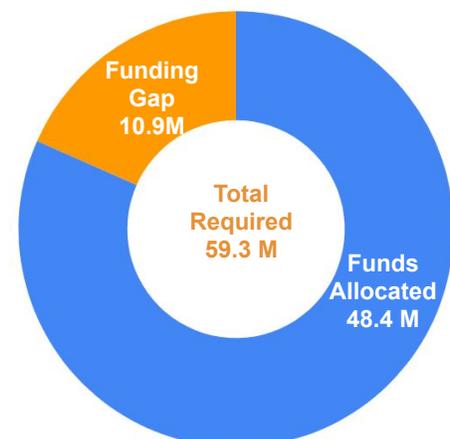


148 M Young People (age 10-24)



13 M Older Persons (age 65+)

Funding Status for Region (US\$)



Regional Response Summary

Regional coordination and partnerships

UNFPA's response in the region aligns with the [2030 Agenda](#), [WHO global strategic preparedness and response plan](#), [UN-coordinated global humanitarian response plan](#), the [UN framework for socio-economic response to COVID-19](#), and the [UNFPA COVID-19 global response plan](#).

UNFPA participates in weekly meetings of the Regional UN Sustainable Development Group for West and Central Africa, attended by Regional Directors, to coordinate the UN response to the pandemic. The health, humanitarian and socio-economic challenges brought about by the pandemic require solidarity for a global response.

Three critical and complementary components of UN efforts are to save lives, protect people and build back better.

- The humanitarian response, as detailed in the OCHA-led COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan, focuses on responding to immediate health and multi-sectoral humanitarian needs in particularly vulnerable countries.
- The health response, led by WHO and detailed in the Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP), focuses on supporting public health measures to stop the transmission of the virus and to care for those affected. The adapted SPRP in the region has six pillars of the public health response: 1) country-level coordination, planning and monitoring; 2) risk communication and community engagement; 3) surveillance, laboratories and points of entry; 4) rapid response teams; 5) infection prevention and control and case management; and 6) operational support and logistics.
- The UN Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19, to mitigate the social and economic impacts of COVID-19, focuses on supporting governments and communities through five work streams: 1) protecting health services and systems; 2) ensuring social protection and basic services; 3) protecting jobs and small- and medium-sized enterprises; 4) supporting macroeconomic choices and international cooperation and multilateralism; and 5) enhancing social cohesion and community resilience.



Spaces for women and girls © UNFPA-Olivier Girard-Chad

1. Continuity of SRH services and interventions, including protection of health workforce

- In 17 countries in the region, UNFPA is leading life-saving SRH services through the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for reproductive health in emergencies.
- 111,964 women and youth accessed integrated SRH services in UNFPA-supported facilities in Liberia (62,800), Senegal (42,832), Sierra Leone (3,189), Guinea-Bissau (2,002), and Benin (1,141).
- In 12 countries, emergency obstetric and newborn care as per international recommended minimum standards is guaranteed thanks to UNFPA support. (These countries are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal and Togo).
- In 7 countries, UNFPA is leading the national COVID-19 contact-tracing and case monitoring mechanisms (these countries are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Niger and Senegal).
- At least 16,458 safe deliveries were facilitated in UNFPA-supported facilities in Benin (3,647), Guinea-Bissau (114), Senegal (7,779), Sierra Leone (2,330) and Togo (2,588).
- Some 2,960 contact-tracers were trained and deployed with UNFPA support in Burkina Faso (700), Cabo Verde (60), Liberia (447), Niger (92) and Senegal (1,661).
- 2,712 contacts were traced with UNFPA support in Chad (50), Gambia (789) and Liberia (1873).

Country examples:

- **Burkina Faso:** From 19 to 30 November, 32 gynecology (21) and urology (11) specialists were trained in Ouagadougou in the prevention and surgical management of obstetric fistula. This training, organized by the Family Health Department and funded by UNFPA, made it possible to treat 34 women.
- **Central African Republic:** 60 Reproductive Health service providers from 5 of 7 health regions in the country were trained in November on the prevention and control of COVID-19 infection and provided with protection kits after the training.
- **Ghana:** UNFPA built the capacity of 32 personnel from three disaster response teams in the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Reproductive Health in Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region. This training was done in collaboration with WHO to ensure coordination and continuity of essential reproductive health services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fifty young people benefited from a five-day adolescent sexual and reproductive health programme organised by the National Youth Authority in collaboration with the Government of Ghana and sponsored by UNFPA. The intervention sought to create an enabling environment for adolescents, and empowered them to make decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive lives. As part of ongoing efforts to leave no one behind, UNFPA Ghana supported the Henry Djaba Memorial Foundation to launch a national campaign to mobilise wheelchairs and walking aids for 187,522 persons with disabilities. The campaign dubbed: "1000 Wheelchairs and Walking Aids – fit for life," aims to mobilize at least 16,000 wheelchairs and walking aids to mitigate mobility difficulties of persons with disabilities at all times, including when accessing SRH services.
- **Guinea-Bissau:** UNFPA provided the Regional Health Directorate of Bissau (SAB) for public and private health centers with 10 devices for foot washing, 500 protective masks, and 50 posters to sensitize pregnant women on the proper use of masks to support health and help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- **Liberia:** UNFPA continues to provide SRH services to disadvantaged youth through outreach and youth drop-in centers in Montserrado County, the epicenter of COVID-19. During the month of October and November, a total of 7,524 (26% females and 74% males) young people were reached with SRHR services in Montserrado County including family planning counseling and commodities: 2,606; Pregnancy Test: 74, 11 positive, 63 negative; STI Treatment: 2590; HIV Counseling and Testing: 2254, 57 positive, 2197 negative. In Lofa County, from 19 October to 14 November, a total of 15,831 clients across 69 communities in the four health districts (Zorzor, Voinjama, Kolahun and Foya) benefited from the three week-long family planning outreach efforts conducted by the Lofa County Health Team.

1. Continuity of SRH services and interventions (continued)

- **Mali:** UNFPA Mali contributed to strengthening the health system in the response to COVID-19 and maintaining reproductive health and family planning services by contributing nearly \$11,000 USD for the delivery of equipment and materials to the Ministries of Women's Promotion and Health and implementing partners. The equipment consisted of: 40 computer tablets made available to the Ministry of Health and Social Development for COVID-19 surveillance and contact person follow-up; 10,000 stamped washable masks, 30 Thermoflash, 150 hand washing kits, 950 bottles of 1l hydroalcoholic gel and 500 bottles of 500 ml hydroalcoholic gel, 150 gel dispensers, 600 bottles of bleach, 300 bottles of liquid soap; 3 laptops and 3 Soboxes for internet connection. A total of 500 young people were trained in communication on protective measures against COVID-19 to relay the knowledge they have acquired to their peers and the general population in grouping sites and on social networks (Project RADJAD). See <https://www.facebook.com/IYA4D/>
- **Nigeria:** In the initial stage of the pandemic, the UN supported the Government of Nigeria to procure personal protective equipment (PPE). UNFPA contributed an estimated \$230,000 (US) to this effort. Under output 4 of the *One UN COVID-19 Response Plan for Nigeria*, access to essential health services maintained – support is being provided to ensure the continuity of essential health services, including reproductive and maternal health care, through the deployment and protection of medical personnel, medicines, diagnostics, PPE, and rehabilitation of WASH and other essential facilities. UNFPA procured items including male and female condoms, Reproductive Health Kits 3 (for clinical management of rape), dignity kits, essential maternal health medicines, personal protective equipment and consumables as well as menstrual hygiene packs. Several assessments were conducted in 320 health facilities and surrounding communities involving more than 5,000 persons including healthcare workers, adolescents, young women and adult women, community and traditional leaders, and vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities and people living with HIV. These assessments inform project implementation effectiveness and efficiency. UNFPA also supported the provision of mini ambulances to enhance continuity of SRH service and effective referral.
- **Sierra Leone:** In September and October, with support from the UKAID-funded Saving Lives programme to CUAMM, UNFPA supported maternal health services in three of the five main referral hospitals for 1,115 safe deliveries at Princess Christian Maternal Hosnital: 658 at Bo Hospital; and 441 at Makeni Hospital.
- **Togo:** The Minister of Health, Public Hygiene and Universal Access to Health Care launched on 12 November in Lomé the project, *Support for community health workers and civil society organizations in the search for contacts to stem the spread of the epidemic to COVID-19 in Togo*.. This project is co-financed by the Canadian Embassy, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, WHO under the coordination of the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system in Togo. At the end of the launching ceremony, the equipment and materials acquired under the project were officially handed over. These include 360 Samsung Smartphones with internet credit, 180 thermoflashes, 360 protective visors, 18,000 bibs, 720 bars of Marseille soap, 360 liters of bleach, 36,000 bulk gloves, 360 liters of hydro alcoholic gel, 800 T-shirts and posters. This equipment will enable community health workers and other community structures to be operational to slow and stop the spread of COVID-19 in Togo.



Contact tracing training in Togo to support efforts for COVID-19 infection, prevention and control.
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2. Addressing Gender-Based Violence

- In 16 countries, UNFPA is leading GBV prevention and response coordination mechanisms.
- In 14 countries, there is an alert mechanism in place to identify and report cases of GBV.
- 2,254 women and girls subjected to violence, including those with disabilities, have accessed essential services (health, social, police and justice) in Burkina Faso (117), Cabo Verde (58), Cameroon (217), Chad (1326), Congo (103) and Togo (433).

Country examples:

- **Ghana:** UNFPA-Ghana and Global Affairs Canada, under the auspices of the Western Regional Coordinating Council (WRCC), organized a forum for 50 Imams and opinion leaders to discuss ending child marriage in the region. The National Chief Imam, Shiekh Osman Nuhu Sharubutu, committed to supporting UNFPA-Ghana in ending preventable maternal deaths, ending unmet need for family planning, and ending gender-based violence and harmful practices such as child marriage and FGM by 2030. UNFPA- Ghana, together with partners, including the UN Resident Coordinator, launched this year's 16 Days of Activism against sexual and gender-based violence under the theme- "Accelerate Action to Prevent Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in the wake of COVID-19: The Role of Sustainable Funding".
- **Mali:** During the month of November, UNFPA carried out the following activities: i) Delivery of 30 dignity kits and protective equipment COVID-19 to 30 disabled women of the Association for the Strengthening of Persons with Disabilities (ARCAPH); ii) Training of 33 members of the PSEA National Network on Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse using the new IASC module, distribution of masks and gel during the 3 days of training; iii) Integration of the COVID-19 theme in all information activities on GBV carried out by implementing partners, including youth organizations
- **Nigeria:** Under the risk communication and community and civil society engagement, UNFPA is working with partners, including high profile celebrities, to develop a series of short videos to highlight the various types of GBV and harmful practices (child marriage, fistula and FGM) linking with the vital SRH issues that may affect girls, women as well as boys and men as part of the media campaign to create a high level of awareness and action. UNFPA supported and collaborated with the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, led by the Honorable Minister, to recognize the International Day of the Girl Child to create awareness among girls and adolescents on GBV and harmful practices, the need for girls' education and for the passage of laws and policies to protect them, namely the Child Rights Act and the VAPP. UNFPA launched the Orange Day campaign recognizing and creating awareness around GBV and harmful practices on the 25th of every month to maintain national awareness to prevent and end violence against women and girls, especially sexual assault and rape. UNFPA also supports the capacity building of key media houses to improve the quality of reportage around COVID-19, GBV and harmful practices. As a result of school closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, adolescent girls were engaged virtually via radio broadcast of safe space modules on literacy, numeracy and life skills. These girls access the radio messages using radio sets purchased and distributed to all 9,000 girls enrolled in the program. A monitoring mechanism has been put in place to monitor the girls' utilization of the radio and the impact on their knowledge. A total of 16 sessions plus repeat sessions were broadcast. In addition, 450 trained female mentor teachers were engaged in tracking and monitoring the radio learning sessions and ensuring the girls benefit from the virtual sessions. This was achieved through weekly visits to homes to monitor the progress of girls, resolve any challenge encountered and provide feedback on the program to UNFPA and its implementing partner.

2. Addressing Gender-Based Violence (continued)

- **Sierra Leone:** UNFPA Sierra Leone supported the 5th Annual National Girls Empowerment Forum from 9 to 11 October, celebrating the International Day of the Girl Child on 11 October 2020. The theme of the forum was 'Ending Gender Based Violence: Girls Speak Up, Thrive and Inspire to Succeed!' The forum brought together 80 girls from around Sierra Leone and featured presentations, workshops and speeches, with a keynote address from Hon. Manty Tarawalli, Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs. UNFPA facilitated a workshop on life skills focused on self-confidence, and presented dignity kits to the girls. UNFPA Sierra Leone is continuing to support and equip the One-Stop Gender-based violence centres with the generous support of Irish Aid and the Government of China. Government One-Stop centres, which receive support from UNFPA Sierra Leone, continue to offer services to survivors of GBV. Data from September show survivors received one or more of the following services: medical treatment (77), legal services (78) and psychosocial support (78). UNFPA continued to ensure the availability of free counselling and clinical services to gender-based violence survivors through our implementing partner Rainbo Initiative at the centres in Bo and Freetown. In September, a total of 167 survivors were provided with free services. In October, a further 141 individuals received services. Of these, one was an individual living with a disability.
- **Togo:** UNFPA Togo supported the organization of a webinar on October 30, 2020 around the virtual assistant Akofa. An application developed by the Groupe de Réflexion Femme Démocratie et Développement to collect GBV in this period of COVID-19. The modules discussed are the resilience of women and girls in the face of crises, abuse and sexual exploitation and the way it works.



Women in Crisis Movement Director Juliana Konteh talking to girls with their school packages in Mambolo chiefdom, Kambia District. ©UNFPA Sierra Leone John Sesay

3. Ensuring the supply of modern contraceptives and other reproductive health commodities

- There is a significant risk of contraceptive stockouts in four countries (Cameroon, Gabon, Gambia, Mauritania).
- A total of 645,930 couple-years of protection for contraceptives were procured by UNFPA, including condoms in Benin (41,152), Chad (203,583), Senegal (281,195) and Sierra Leone (120,000).

Country examples:

- **Burkina Faso:** As part of the fight against COVID-19, UNFPA provided health facilities with RH kits and safe motherhood drugs in the health districts of Boulmiougou, Bogodogo, and Tengandogo University Hospital Center. At a total cost of \$70,000, the delivery ceremony was held on 23 November with the presence of the UNFPA Resident Representative, officials from the Ministry of Health, health workers and regional authorities. This donation of kits and medicines contributes to the continuity of SRH services during the pandemic.
- **Ghana:** Ms Amina J. Mohammed, the UN Deputy Secretary-General and her entourage undertook a 2-day visit to Ghana and visited the Adabraka Polyclinic to see first-hand the continuity of essential maternal health/SRH services, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. She was pleased to see the rights and choices of women supported by UNFPA and partners in providing family planning services. She also visited a UNFPA-UNAIDS project at Jamestown, which empowers young people living with HIV and disabilities.
- **Guinea-Bissau:** UNFPA provided 7,200 condoms to the NGO ADPP and the National Network of People Living with HIV for the International Testing Week in Bissau from 23 to 29 November.
- **Liberia:** UNFPA supported the Government of Liberia to distribute contraceptives in the 15 counties to ensure sustained supply and prevent stock-out. The Country Office supported the quarterly pipeline monitoring meeting on RH commodities using the quantification/forecast plan of 2020 and this information will be used to inform forecasting and quantification for 2021.
- **Mali:** To strengthen the health system and maintain continuity of services, the UNFPA Mali office contributed to the Ministry of Health and Social Development through by delivering 29,000 IUD units to the Pharmacie Populaire du Mali, and organizing a training session for 22 service providers in Kayes to ensure the continuity of services despite the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Nigeria:** UNFPA commenced the bulk procurement of supplies including male and female condoms to enhance the continuity of family planning services. The UNFPA Country Representative carried out high-level visits to the Minister of Health and selected Governors including those of Lagos, Sokoto and Borno States, to advocate and forge partnerships for continuity of the supply chain and family planning services.
- **Sierra Leone:** UNFPA Sierra Leone delivered injectable contraceptives to the central medical stores to protect more than 140,000 couples for a period of one year. In addition, two key life-saving maternal health medicines (magnesium sulphate and oxytocin), were delivered to help prevent maternal deaths due to the two major causes, post-partum haemorrhage and severe hypertension.

Media & Communications

UNFPA raises awareness, shares guidance and showcases achievements through media outreach.

The Regional Office continues to participate in the regional working group on Risk Communications and Community Engagement (RCCE), with UNICEF as lead and WHO as co-lead. The RCCE group runs a media campaign to raise awareness on COVID-19 response through a multilingual website. The website includes local languages most spoken by people across the region.

Country examples:

Ghana:

- [Child Marriage is a crime - Gender Ministry](#)
- [Humanitarian support must include Sexual and Reproductive Health issues - UNFPA](#)
- [MyJoyOnline.com - Ghana's most comprehensive website. Credible, fearless and independent journalism](#)
- <https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/national/henry-djaba-foundation-campaign-targets-more-than-180000-pwds>
- [International Community urged to support Ghana's 1000 Wheelchair Campaign](#)
- [MyJoyOnline.com - Ghana's most comprehensive website. Credible, fearless and independent journalism](#)
- <https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/national/unfpa-country-director-calls-on-chiefs-celebrities-to-champion-the-fight-against-all-forms-of-violence-against-females>
- <https://newsghana.com.gh/un-deputy-secretary-general-amina-mohammed-tour-project-sites-in-accra/>
- [UNFPA's intervention improves adolescent sexual and reproductive rights](#)
- [Reinforcing the role of Muslim Clerics in achieving UNFPA's 3 Zeros](#)
- [Engaging Men and Boys to Promote Positive Masculinity](#)
- [Sharing knowledge and good practices to advance the Post Nairobi Agenda on ICPD.](#)
- <https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/national/gender-ministry-launches-16-day-activism-campaign/>

Guinea-Bissau:

- <https://www.facebook.com/104105848001667/posts/179895390422712/?extid=0&d=n>

Nigeria:

- [UN charges Nigerian govt. stakeholders to end shadow Pandemic, Gender-Based Violence](#)
- [Turning the Tide On Gender-Based Violence In Nigeria In the Midst of COVID-19. By Edward Kallon](#)
- [Ending child sexual abuse in Nigeria: Stakeholders proffer solutions](#)
- <https://www.thejakartapost.com/life/2020/11/26/in-new-un-role-ex-cnn-journalist-seeks-to-end-abuse-of-women-and-girls.html>
- [This Visual Artist Is Highlighting Nigerian Women's Stories of Gender Violence](#)

Sierra Leone:

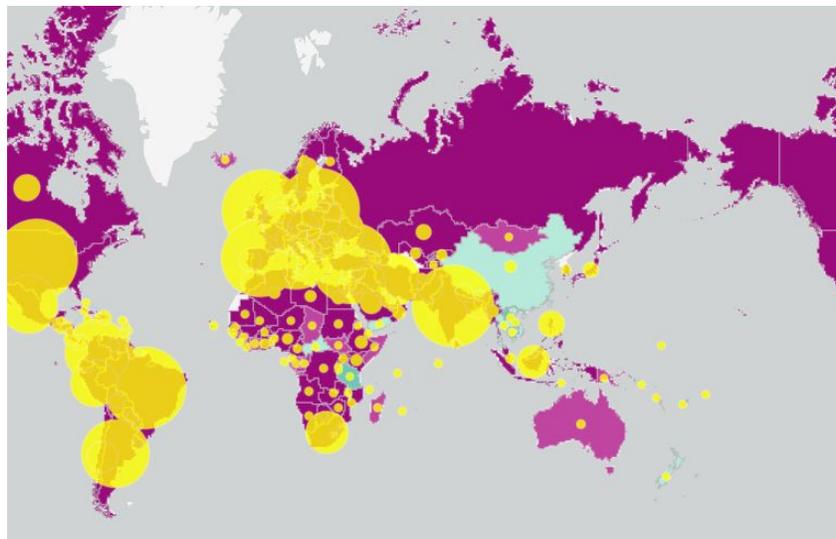
- <https://sierraleone.unfpa.org/en/news/unfpa-implements-numerous-measures-to-government-hospital-improve-obstetric-care-services>
- [UNFPA provides back to school kits to 1000 adolescent girls in three districts](#)

Togo:

- [Des organisations de jeunes se forment sur la santé sexuelle et reproductive](#)
- [Togo/Santé sexuelle et reproductive: Des organisations de jeunes portent leur réflexion sur le sujet -](#)
- [Autonomisation des jeunes : l'UNFPA-Togo ouvre l'« Espace Orange Jeune »](#)
- [Togo/UNFPA: Ouverture d'un espace dédié à la jeunesse togolaise](#)
- https://youtu.be/9_XAQYhrZ8E
- [Campagne ONU75 : l'UNFPA et les jeunes préparent la contribution du Togo](#)

Confirmed Cases and Deaths (UNFPA programme countries) WHO, 22 December 2020

Country	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Benin	3,167	44
Burkina Faso	5,301	76
Cabo Verde	11,600	111
Cameroon	25,849	448
Central African Republic	4,948	63
Chad	1,902	102
Congo Republic	6,200	100
Côte d'Ivoire	21,932	133
Equatorial Guinea	5,231	85
Gabon	9,420	64
Gambia	3,789	123
Ghana	53,954	333
Guinea	13,550	80
Guinea-Bissau	2,447	44
Liberia	1,788	83
Mali	6,232	225
Mauritania	10,971	225
Niger	2,361	82
Nigeria	78,790	1,227
Sao Tome and Principe	1,012	17
Senegal	17,879	371
Sierra Leone	2,497	75
Togo	3,436	66
Total number of cases	294,256	4,177



See UNFPA's [COVID-19 Population Vulnerability Dashboard](#) for real-time updates