

Regional Response Summary

Coordination and partnerships

The UNFPA 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 [UNFPA COVID-19 global response plan](#).

Country offices are engaging and coordinating with the governments, UN agencies and civil society partners. In line with its global response plan, UNFPA continues to influence national COVID-19 response plans.

On the UN socio-economic response plan to COVID-19, UNFPA engagements and inputs are informed by:

- Impact on health systems and disruption of essential health service delivery, such as continuity of SRH/HIV/GBV services;
- Increased incidence of GBV demonstrated by the increased reporting through self-help lines and safe spaces; and
- Disruption of menstrual hygiene management in areas with limited access to water, sanitation and hygiene products for adolescent girls and young women.

UN regional offices have formed a “migration working group” that is working with countries and the regional economic communities to address the plight of migrants and refugees in the COVID-19 era. Agencies are deploying their regional and country assets to influence the National COVID-19 task forces to ensure migrants are not left behind in the responses.

UNFPA chairs the regional continuity of essential health services working group. The group carries out routine tracking of disruption of essential health services using quantitative, qualitative and anecdotal reporting tools including media monitoring within the region. To ensure continued focus on ongoing humanitarian crises, UNFPA is involved in other regional humanitarian coordination forums. The regional GBV working groups are also supporting the countries to focus current programmes to respond to COVID-19 and address GBV programme implementation challenges occasioned by COVID-19.

Continuity of SRH interventions, including protection of health workforce

The regional office and the country offices have supported the continuity of essential SRH services by:

- Advocacy for continuity of essential SRH services at national and sub national levels.
- Monitoring disruptions of SRH services and providing technical support to overcome the bottlenecks in service delivery.
- Strengthening operational and logistics support to national supply chains, including providing PPE to health workers; and facilitating additional supplies of modern contraceptives and other SRH commodities.
- Support the capacity building efforts for frontline SRH workers and health facility optimization for COVID-19 through virtual training platforms and mentorships.
- Support risk communications and community engagement initiatives aimed at reducing risk of COVID-19 transmission while addressing the increasing fear of health facilities by communities especially women and girls.
- In partnership with WHO, UNICEF and UNAIDS, the regional office is developing mechanisms to track the disruptions of SRH services and utilization that have been brought upon by COVID-19. This is intended to complement existing strategies in the region and continent including the African Health Observatory, Demographic Surveillance Sites and existing national health management information systems in countries.

Country examples:

In **Uganda**, UNFPA continues to support the programme districts with PPE and fuel to support referrals for emergency obstetric care. As a result a total of 18,615 women have been supported to access antenatal care (ANC) services; 4,958 have accessed delivery services, including 723 who accessed emergency obstetric care (EMOC); 8,944 women have accessed postnatal care services; 10,016 clients, including young people have been supported to receive family planning services. In addition, health facilities have supported 76 gender-based violence (GBV) survivors to access services during COVID-19.

In **Botswana**, UNFPA supported the Ministry of Health in the development of a national Guidelines for maintaining SRH Services in COVID-19 which has now been finalized and will be launched. The Guidelines consolidate available recommendations on the continuity of essential health services in the context of COVID-19 and provide guidance on how healthcare managers and facilities can adapt and reinforce routine service delivery while implementing other efforts to address the disease in populations.

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Country examples (continuation):

In **Zambia**, as part of the initial support, the CO supported the orientation of 25 healthcare providers (HCPs) in Infection Prevention and Control in Western Province that is most affected by the pandemic. As follow up support to the above, the CO recently supported the Provincial Health Office in Western Province to conduct follow up of 10 HCPs trained in IPC for COVID-19 in 3 districts. UNFPA has also distributed PPE to facilities in these areas.

In **South Africa**, UNFPA is providing technical assistance to the National Department of Social Development (DSD) and National Department of Health (NDOH) to support delivery of essential SRHR and maternal and newborn health services in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape. The project aims at providing catch up SRHR interventions following severe disruptions of health services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interventions will also go a long way to support strengthening of health systems in the two provinces. The project will be implemented in partnership with Pink Drive services and the department of Health.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, UNFPA donated 7.5 tons of medical and surgical equipment to the Ituri province. This equipment is expected to strengthen the resilience of health systems in the areas affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and protracted conflict. The province was also hit by the Ebola Viral Disease outbreak before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The equipment will help the facilities improve on the availability and quality of basic and emergency obstetric care.

Addressing gender-based violence: Continuity and adaptation of GBV services and GBV prevention and mitigation measures

The regional office and country offices are working to ensure that the needs of survivors of the rising GBV incidence are met:

- Continuing advocacy for the inclusion of GBV essential services by the national authorities during times of lockdown and other forms of restriction of movement.
- Reprogramming existing GBV initiatives such as the Spotlight Initiative to address rising prevalence of GBV during COVID-19.
- Working with the Regional GBV Emergency Advisors (REGA) based in Nairobi, the regional team is building the capacity of GBV coordinators in humanitarian contexts to ably position GBV as an issue of concern at the humanitarian coordination structures.
- Addressing the dignity needs of women and girls in quarantine centers to help them to easily reintegrate into society at the end of their quarantine period.
- The regional GBV working group conducted situation briefs to the donor community, regional humanitarian coordination forums in East and Southern Africa to improve awareness and support resource mobilization efforts to support the GBV response in light of the rise in cases occasioned by COVID-19.

Country Examples

- In **Namibia**, UNFPA distributed dignity kits to 6,000 targeted women and girls of reproductive age in six drought-affected regions. As part of the emergency and COVID-19 response, UNFPA raised awareness on GBV referral pathways, PSEA and menstrual hygiene management reaching 681 community members in Omaheke and Kunene in October 2020.
- In **Zambia**, through ongoing support to drought prone Districts in Southern Province, the UNFPA continued to support community outreach activities, including door to door sensitization on GBV as it relates to COVID-19. The door to door sensitizations are held with strict adherence to COVID-19 prevention measures. As a way of strengthening GBV information desks in 120 volunteers in two target districts received mentorship in relation to PSEA and GBV risk identification and protection mechanisms including COVID 19 aimed at reducing GBV incidences and COVID-19 cases.
- In **Mozambique** to address the rising cases of GBV in Cabo Delgado province new mobile clinics supported by UNFPA that are providing basic health and GBV services, information and referrals. 80 brigade visits are planned, with each visit benefiting up to 60 people. 40 volunteers and activists supporting the emergency response in the Paquetequette area of Pemba city were trained on Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse. 2,150 dignity kits will be distributed in Pemba province, 300 will be distributed in Niassa and 550 in Nampula province.
- In **Kenya**, UNFPA has maintained support for continuity of services, ensuring reduction of vulnerabilities that lead to increased risks of GBV. This has led to reduction in cases of GBV over current reporting period compared to preceding months. UNFPA distributed 950 dignity kits in Nairobi, Kilifi and Murang'a. 639 GBV cases received by the national GBV Hotline in October 2020 and provided with referral support and psychosocial first aid.

Ensuring the supply of modern contraceptives and other reproductive health commodities

The regional office supplies team continues to work with the country offices to ensure uninterrupted availability of modern contraceptives and reproductive health supplies:

- Closely monitoring family planning and reproductive health (RH) commodity stocks in all countries and providing technical support to address any impending stockouts through redistribution from low consumption countries or any other means.
- Support resource mobilization for procurement of commodities including PPE for health care providers and community-based distributors by country offices.
- Prepositioning family planning and reproductive commodities to avert any shortages arising out of logistical challenges in moving commodities.
- Providing technical support to country offices, implementing partners and Ministries of Health on supply forecasting, distribution and rational use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Country Examples

- **Zimbabwe:** UNFPA continues to work with the World Food Programme and other food security and nutrition actors to ensure that contraceptives and condoms are distributed along side general food distribution. Information on the importance and availability of sexual and reproductive services is also shared with communities during food distribution sessions in the communities.
- In **Burundi**, to ensure the continuity of family planning services, the Ministry of Health, supported by UNFPA, has organized mentorship in 36 health facilities with 228 service providers trained and 556 CHWs coached during 5 days. The coaching focuses on building skills in contraceptive technology, introduction of postpartum family planning, supply chain and prevention against COVID-19 for frontline health providers. In total, 1451 women adopted a modern contraceptive method (48% of whom choose the long-lasting reversible methods — implant and IUD) before leaving the maternity in order to avoid unwanted pregnancies
- In **South Sudan**, UNFPA has supported the South Sudan AIDS Commission and partners to install condom dispensers in strategic locations in Juba city that are accessible by men and women with limited access to condoms. The severe social economic impact of COVID-19 has left many people with no resources to spare to buy condoms which are critical for prevention of unplanned pregnancies and transmission of sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

Risk communication and community engagement, including youth engagement, leaving no one behind

UNFPA is part of the regional risk communications and community engagement working group that aims at providing joint programmatic guidance to country offices, governments and media practitioners in the region.

Country Examples

- In **Kenya**, To promote meaningful participation of women in the sector, the Boda Boda (motorcycle taxi) Safety Association of Kenya (BAK) in collaboration with the State Department for Youth Affairs, the State Department for Gender, UNFPA and I Choose Life – Africa, partnered to launch the national women chapter of the boda boda association which aims to improve the welfare of boda boda women entrepreneurs. The BAK Women Chapter brings together women riders from all the 47 counties, with a goal of strengthening the organization of women in the sector, and amplifying their voices for greater empowerment and social change
- In **Angola**, twelve activists were trained to provide qualified information on SRHR for young people in the U-Report Project Call Center while this infrastructure is being setting. In addition, the project Community Engagement on HIV Prevention during the COVID-19 pandemic was initiated in Luanda Province. So far, the IPs Centro de Apoio ao Jovem (Youth Support Center) and ANASO platform has already reached 4,500 adolescent and youth with information on HIV and COVID-19 prevention in 2 municipalities in Luanda Province.
- In **Rwanda**, UNFPA enhanced its support to NISR to ensure safe collection of DHS data in the context of COVID-19. UNFPA is supporting the finalization of the DHS report together with the preparations for the upcoming Census mapping exercise. UNFPA is also supporting awareness raising on COVID-19 prevention and has procured PPEs for health care providers operating in refugee camps (Mahama, Kiziba, Kigeme & Mugombwa).
- In **Mozambique** 4 videos on COVID-19 and bus transportation, including support for persons with disabilities, public transport disinfection, public guidance and an all-encompassing video on COVID-19, have been developed by the Ministry of Health with UNFPA support. This is expected to support women and girls receive messs

Media & Communications

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

Kenya

[NMS to hire more than 1400 extra health workers amid COVID-19 resurge](#)

[Fulfilling our promise to girls in East and Southern Africa will give voice to and secure their equal ...](#) (ReliefWeb)

OPINION: The right to live free from violence is a basic human right even as we battle COVID-19

https://citizentv.co.ke/lifestyle/opinion-the-right-to-live-free-from-violence-is-a-basic-human-right-even-as-we-battle-COVID-19-343498/?utm_source=relatedarticles&utm_medium=deeplinking&utm_campaign=AlsoRead

Mozambique

Dr. Armindo Daniel Tiago, Minister of Health and Andrea M. Wojnar, UNFPA Representative in Mozambique wrote a joint opinion-editorial in commemoration of World Contraception Day which was published in local newspaper, Jornal Noticias - 16 October 2020 edition and can be found on our website - [Celebrating choice, freedom, rights and the role of contraception](#)

Namibia

On the spot - Abortion: We must go back to the drawing board (New Era, 2020-09-23)

<https://neweralive.na/posts/on-the-spot-abortion-we-must-go-back-to-the-drawing-board>

More join homelessness fight (New Era, 2020-10-30)

<https://neweralive.na/posts/more-join-homelessness-fight>

Omaheke girls get dignity kits (New Era, 2020-10-19)

<https://neweralive.na/posts/omaheke-girls-get-dignity-kits>

The Culture that Enables SGBV . . . and how to change it (The Namibian, 2020-10-16)

<https://www.namibian.com.na/95678/read/The-Culture-that-Enables-SGBV-----and-how-to-change-it>

South Sudan

[Child marriages heightens risk of Obstetric Fistula \(The Dawn,October 10,2020\)](#)

Five-year plan unveiled to end Fistula (Eye radio,October 10,2020)

<https://eyeradio.org/five-year-plan-unveiled-to-end-fistula/>

Obstetric Fistula Prevention Strategy launched ,(The City Review,October 12-17,2020)

[Engaging women in economic activities encourages growth-UN \(The Dawn,October 14, 2020\)](#)

South Sudan Celebrates the international girl child day (The mail,October 13, 2020)

<https://themailnews.com/2020/10/14/south-sudan-celebrates-the-international-girl-child-day/>

Youth should create jobs to avoid insecurity (The mail,October 13, 2020)

<https://themailnews.com/2020/10/14/youth-should-create-jobs-to-avoid-insecurity/>

[Lack of Skills remain cause of unemployment-James Hoth \(No.1 Citizen Daily,October 15,2020\)](#)

[Citizen Daily: Rate of teenage pregnancies is alarming, Gender Minister \(No.1 Citizen Daily,October 15,2020\)](#)

3 of 10 girls pregnant in S.Sudan -Adolescents and Youth Report (Eye radio, October 15, 2020)

<https://eyeradio.org/3-of-10-girls-pregnant-in-s-sudan-adolescents-and-youth-report/>

South Sudan's minister for Gender Child and Social welfare says around 60,000 women in South Sudan need treatment for Fistula (VOA news, October 30,2020)

<https://www.voanews.com/episode/south-sudan-focus-4466271>

Uganda

Cabinet Approves New National Population Policy (Uganda Radio Network, 27th October):

<https://ugandaradionetwork.net/story/cabinet-approves-new-national-population-policy->

Cabinet Approves New National Population Policy (The Independent, 28th October):

<https://www.independent.co.ug/cabinet-approves-new-national-population-policy/>

Baby boom, baby bust: The pandemic may be leading to fewer babies in rich countries (The Economist, 29th October):

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/17Dna5Y6K1pCUweW3ZzPovg9EGRVS37cVTgvcAOC2UDk/edit?ts=5f9ae4e6#heading=h.4e9a2nfsqodq>

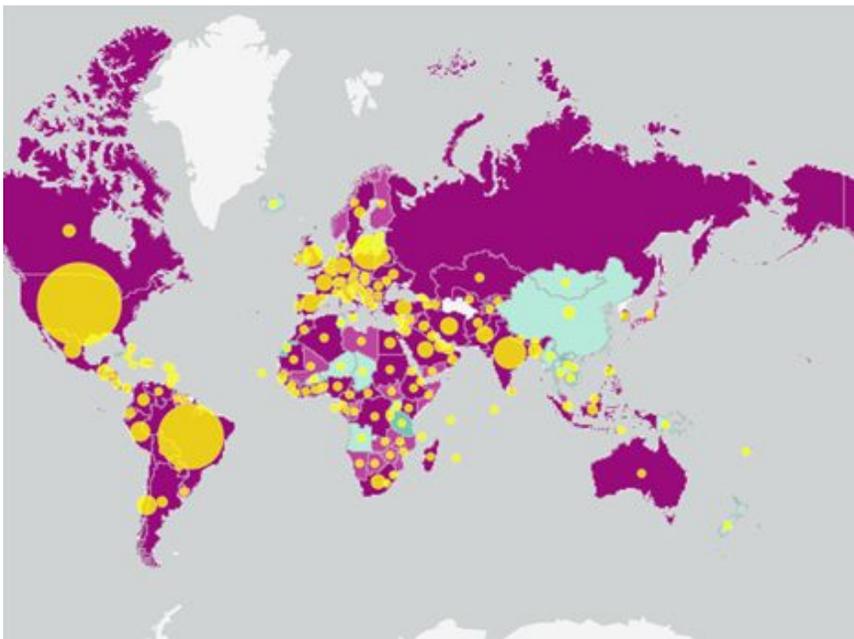
Zimbabwe

[Teenage pregnancies prevalent in Binga](#)

[Sexual violence cases escalating](#)

Confirmed Cases and Deaths (UNFPA programme countries) WHO, 11 November 2020

Country	Confirmed Cases	Deaths
Angola	12,816	308
Botswana	7,835	27
Burundi	620	1
Comoros	563	7
Democratic Republic of the Congo	11,641	316
Eritrea	491	0
Eswatini	6,024	117
Ethiopia	100,327	1,537
Kenya	64,588	1,154
Lesotho	1,967	44
Madagascar	17,233	249
Malawi	5,953	185
Mauritius	467	10
Mozambique	13,892	99
Namibia	13,253	134
Rwanda	5,262	40
Seychelles	158	0
South Africa	740,254	19,951
South Sudan	2,960	59
United Republic of Tanzania	509	21
Uganda	14,704	133
Zambia	16,997	350
Zimbabwe	8,610	255
TOTAL	1,047,124	24,997



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