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Reporting Period: 14 May - 2 June 2020

West and Central Africa Region

COVID-19 Situation Report No. 4

United Nations Population Fund



Regional Highlights

- After three months since the start of the pandemic, the West and Central Africa region has surpassed 50,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19. There have been more than 1,000 deaths, a mortality rate of 2.3 per cent. Three of every five patients are still hospitalized.
- The pandemic continues to spread with an average rate of 1,250 new cases per day over the last 7 days. Three countries have surpassed 5,000 confirmed cases: Nigeria, Ghana and Cameroon. The next highest caseloads include Senegal, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon.
- UNFPA Country Offices continue strategic interventions, in collaboration with partners, to support government response to the COVID-19 pandemic across the region.
- About 15,000 safe deliveries were recorded in UNFPA-supported facilities. These include 7,779 in Senegal, 3,647 in Benin, 2,588 in Togo and 818 in Sierra Leone.
- Over 100,000 women and youth utilised integrated sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services in UNFPA-support facilities in the region.
- About 2,260 contact-tracers were trained and deployed with UNFPA support in Senegal (1,661), Liberia (447), Niger (92) and Cabo Verde (60).
- [TV5Monde](#) reported a story on how UNFPA Liberia ensured a smooth recovery and safe pregnancy and delivery of a COVID-19-positive nurse.

Situation in Numbers

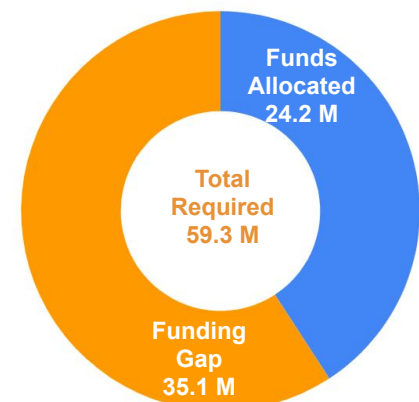
- 
54,930 Confirmed COVID-19 Cases
- 
1,159 COVID-19 Deaths

Source: WHO June 05, 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

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

As Chair of the Regional UN Sustainable Development Group for West and Central Africa, UNFPA chairs weekly meetings of the Regional Directors Group to maintain a coordinated response to the pandemic. The health, humanitarian and economic challenges, brought about by the pandemic, require solidarity for a global response. There are three critical and complementary components of the UN's efforts to save lives, protect people and rebuild better:

- The humanitarian response, as detailed in the OCHA-led COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan: responding to immediate health and multi-sectoral humanitarian needs in especially vulnerable countries.
- Health response, led by the WHO and detailed in the Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP): to support public health measures to stop the transmission of the virus and care for those affected. The SPRP was adapted in the region with 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. The framework focuses on supporting governments and communities through five work streams: 1) Protecting health services and systems; 2) social protection and basic services; 3) protecting jobs and small- and medium-sized enterprises; 4) macroeconomic choices and international cooperation and multilateralism; and 5) social cohesion and community resilience.
- UNFPA regional office has presented a **practical guide and lessons learned from a 20-year review of pandemics**. The findings provide guidance on ensuring the continuity of reproductive, maternal, neonatal and adolescent health in times of pandemics. The review looked at past pandemics including SARS-CoV, HIV/AIDS, Ebola Virus Disease, Zika and MERS-CoV.

UNFPA leadership on data and evidence for better informed decisions

- The manner and the extent to which epidemics affect women, children and other vulnerable populations is crucial in creating effective and equitable response measures. The regional office held a virtual press conference on Friday, 15 May 2020, to present findings of the 20-year review of pandemics. The study provides a set of lessons learned from the past epidemics, with an emphasis on how to ensure a continuity of reproductive, maternal, child and adolescent health services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Launching of the GBV Regional Working Group

- On 22 May 2020, the UNFPA Regional Director launched a regional working group on gender-based violence (GBV) in emergencies aimed at multiplying inter-agency efforts towards the elimination of GBV in emergency and fragile settings. Eight UN agencies, 11 international NGOs and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) attended the meeting. The Regional Director underlined the multidimensional nature of GBV and encouraged an integrated approach, linked with traditionally-perceived development issues such as domestic violence, child marriage and female genital mutilation that worsen during crises.
- As lead of the Regional Protection Working Group, UNHCR underlined the need for reliable data on GBV to better inform the response and capacity building needs for regional support. The group will implement the GBV Area of Responsibility strategy in the region including capacity strengthening and information management. It will also ensure a strong link with field operations.

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

- In 17 countries, UNFPA is leading life-saving SRH services through the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for reproductive health in emergencies.
- 108,775 women and youth utilised integrated SRH services in UNFPA-supported facilities in Benin (1,141), Guinea-Bissau (2,002), Senegal (42,832) and Liberia (62,800).
- In nine countries, there is functional emergency obstetric and newborn care coverage, per international recommended minimum standards (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo).
- In seven countries, UNFPA is leading national contact-tracing and case monitoring (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Niger and Senegal).
- 14,946 safe deliveries were facilitated in UNFPA-supported facilities in Benin (3,647), Guinea-Bissau (114), Senegal (7,779), Sierra Leone (818) and Togo (2,588).
- 2,260 contact-tracers were trained and deployed with UNFPA support in Cabo Verde (60), Liberia (447), Niger (92) and Senegal (1,661).
- 1,754 contacts were traced with UNFPA support in Gambia (789) and Liberia (965).

Country examples:

- **Niger:** With the support of UNFPA, the Issaka Gazoby National Reference Maternity Hospital in Niamey has been equipped with SRH kits, in particular those for the management of obstetric complications (11A and 11B) and kits for assisted deliveries (6A and 6B). These kits contain personal protective equipment (PPE), in particular surgical gloves, goggles and aprons, as well as solutions for disinfecting tablets for the preparation of chlorinated bleach solutions and chlorhexidine. Another neighbourhood maternity hospital in Niamey, Dar Es Salaam maternity hospital, which performs an average of 200 assisted deliveries per month, received support with assisted delivery kits (6A and 6B). In humanitarian zones, UNFPA has supported 14 health centres in the 4 regions affected by the crisis (Diffa, Maradi, Tillabery and Tahoua) with PPE and disinfection materials. All midwives and psychologists deployed in the field are equipped with PPE to work in the safest possible conditions. Niger is in the process of forming Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health (CSRH) with the support of IAWG for reproductive health and headquarters. The situation of the COVID-19 pandemic will be taken into account to deliver the CSRH.
- **Sierra Leone:** UNFPA is supporting the establishment of isolation centres in the country's five comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care facilities, to be operated by health professionals trained in infection prevention and control. UNFPA is coordinating the establishment of a separate isolation facility for UN staff and dependents. In collaboration with the UN Country Team, UNFPA Sierra Leone is also coordinating the establishment of a specialised COVID-19 treatment centre to support the national response.
- **Liberia:** UNFPA supported the establishment of a maternity wing at the 14 Military Hospital, the national COVID-19 treatment centre. Plans to hand over the centre's maternity functions are expected to take place in the coming week. An additional four regional treatment centres will be supported to ensure maternity care for patients with confirmed cases. A nation-wide training of skilled birth attendants in maternal and child health management and infection prevention and control is also being planned in collaboration with USAID, World Bank, UNICEF and the Government of Liberia.
- **Senegal:** With implementing partners, UNFPA revised the annual work plan to support COVID-19 response, allocating almost 70 per cent of its funding to the ten medical regions to support the continuity of maternal health services and neonatal care, family planning, and adolescent and youth reproductive health. UNFPA has provided the Department of Mother and Child Health with a large amount of PPE (surgical masks, disposable gowns and hydroalcoholic solution) for midwives and neighborhood health workers to ensure continuity of reproductive health services.

- **Ghana:** UNFPA supported the Ghana Health Service by providing over 700 Dignity Kits and hygiene items to those in mandatory quarantine in the Pentecost Convention Centre. The International Day of Families was commemorated in the isolation centre, to recognize the dedicated work of the staff and to show appreciation to those who were in quarantine, in keeping others safe. UNFPA has also undertaken a number of community-based outreach visits with the objective of empowering citizens, especially adolescent girls and women, with information on SRH issues, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), especially through the UNFPA-supported DOVVSU Hotline for reporting GBV cases, and COVID-19 prevention information. These efforts reached: 2,735 women, 2,614 men and 2,010 young people in over 237 households in 23 communities.
- **Burkina Faso:** Women of reproductive age and pregnant women continue to benefit from reproductive health and childbirth services for their health and well-being. To ensure that women receive this care safely, UNFPA Burkina Faso has provided front-line workers with PPE. A batch of equipment consisting of 2,000 KN95 masks and 115 pieces of PPE were provided to reproductive and maternal health providers of 85 health centres in the central region. This allocation is made to ensure the protection and continuity of reproductive health services. The central region is the most affected by COVID-19, with 674 confirmed cases out of a total 812 cases recorded for the whole country as of 19 May 2020.
- **Guinea-Bissau:** Using an integrated sensitisation approach, UNFPA continued through its partnership with ADPP, a national organization operating in the country since 1981, to conduct interpersonal sensitisation sessions on COVID-19, and SRH service utilisation in the COVID-19 context, reaching 1,707 people (1,093 men and 614 women). In addition, UNFPA Guinea-Bissau delivered 1,500 face masks to the Institute for Women and Children in the framework of the prevention and fight against COVID-19 in the country. Some of these face masks will be distributed to healthcare providers, especially midwives and nurses, to support the delivery of high quality SRH services while protecting against infection and spread of COVID-19. The delivery ceremony took place at the Institute compound in the presence of officials from both institutions.
- **Côte d'Ivoire:** One of the priorities of UNFPA's action is the protection of health workers from 80 health facilities in Abidjan (the epicentre of the pandemic). The value of UNFPA's contribution to national efforts against the disease is estimated at USD 176,922 and includes PPE (e.g., protective gowns, doppler stethoscope, facial infrared thermometer, masks, gloves, protective eye glasses, hydroalcoholic gel and liquid soap). The virtual ceremony took place in the presence of high-level representatives: Minister of Health and Public Hygiene, representative of Minister of Economy and Finance, UNFPA Representative, Director of Maternal and Child Health, and other implementing partners.
- **Congo:** UNFPA supported reproductive health interventions on International Midwifery Day. UNFPA organised activities to recognise the important role that midwives play in caring for pregnant women, parturients, breastfeeding mothers and newborns. UNFPA organised a large meeting bringing together Ministry of Health officials, experts on reproductive health and GBV issues, journalists, midwives, association leaders and beneficiaries of their work. Proposals were made to improve midwives' working conditions. UNFPA also provided the Ministry of Health with various equipment and inputs, valued at an estimated US\$ 200,000. This donation includes PPE for midwives, reproductive health medicines, mother kits, GBV kits and disinfectants, among others.
- **Togo:** Supported the procurement of PPE for 100 emergency neonatal care and maternity units and community providers (120,000 FFP2 masks, 701,000 pairs of gloves and 3,200 litres of alcohol). Hand-washing facilities were also provided to the maternity hospitals. On behalf of the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, an order for PPE and the management of part of the communication was placed as part of the national plan to respond to COVID-19. UNFPA has submitted a funding request to the Embassy of Canada for the funding of a contact tracing project in the central and savannah regions in the border areas in Ghana.
- **Sao Tome and Principe:** UNFPA's action in support of national response efforts to COVID-19 includes advocacy, technical assistance, resource mobilization, support for risk communication (focused on youth) as well as guidance on caring for pregnant women so that no mother loses her life while giving birth.

2. Addressing Gender-Based Violence

- In 16 countries, UNFPA is leading GBV prevention and response coordination.
- In 10 countries, there is an alert mechanism in place to identify and report cases of GBV.
- 1,415 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 (590) and Togo (433).

Country examples:

- **Niger:** Following alerts by the national police involved in the Spotlight Initiative to End Violence Against Women, as well as statistics from the police in Niamey, UNFPA Niger is documenting the increase in cases of domestic violence in the context of the lockdown and COVID-19. The national police and the gendarmerie are engaging in a Memorandum of Understanding with UNFPA for a programme to reinforce their contribution to the prevention and response to GBV, as well as to integrate their data in national sets on GBV. UNFPA has equipped the police and the gendarmerie with prevention kits and materials for the prevention of COVID-19. Association Pour le Bien Etre, a UNFPA partner for GBV response in humanitarian areas, provides adapted case management to the current COVID-19 context. In addition, the NGO has intensified sensitisation on GBV to strengthen prevention in a context of increased risks of violence for women and girls. Essential GBV services have never been discontinued, and 14 social workers, 8 psychologists, 9 midwives and 2 legal counselors ensure a comprehensive response to GBV including holistic care for survivors.
- **Sierra Leone:** At least 600,000 people are being targeted through a new public-private partnership between UNFPA, in collaboration with the government, UN partners and the mobile phone provider Africell SL. SMS messages are aimed at subscribers with data, and voice messages are targeted at low-literacy subscribers. These messages are on GBV, family planning, maternal health and COVID-19. UNFPA also supported the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs to establish a GBV '116' hotline to provide counselling and referral services to survivors of GBV. UNFPA has continued to offer GBV case management in two centres through the NGO partner Rainbo Initiative. Specialised services include psychosocial support towards free counselling, as well as clinical services to survivors. UNFPA is also supporting the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs to set up two government sites.
- **Senegal:** Survivors of fistula and GBV in the region of Tambacounda, in southern Senegal, benefited from the "housewife basket" initiative to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable families.
- **Ghana:** UNFPA, the government of Canada, and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service have launched a campaign to mitigate the various forms of GBV and harmful practices, especially during the COVID-19 context, with the objective of protecting the most vulnerable in society, particularly women and girls.
- **Côte d'Ivoire:** UNFPA has rapidly adapted the GBV services offered in the capital, including the referral pathways and establishing mobile phone-based support. The opening of a new hotline managed by the National Committee against GBV is in progress. Some reporting on new cases of intimate partner violence has led the Ministry of Gender and UNFPA to launch a national-level sensitisation through the hotline, as well as zero tolerance by the justice system on violence within the house. The National Police has also sent out a 'note circulaire' to alert the public on the increase of domestic violence risks and the importance of addressing this in their response.
- **Guinea-Bissau:** Twenty focal points of the BLOKSAN platform in Guinea-Bissau were trained on COVID-19 prevention and prevention of GBV in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The BLOKSAN platform, a newly created initiative of ANA PEREIRA FONDATION, one of UNFPA's implementing partners, is an online platform for health protection, defense of the human rights of women and children and promotion of gender equality and equity in the context of COVID-19. These focal points will be collecting GBV data using a telephone-based system in Guinea-Bissau.

- **Burkina Faso:** 2,500 dignity kits were distributed to vulnerable women in the North Central region, at the level of the maternal and child health services (MCH). This strategy has the advantage of improving the use of MCH services in the various health facilities, but above all, offering first-line support to survivors of GBV. Nearly 4,000 adolescent girls and young people aged 10 to 24 benefited from sessions to strengthen life skills and the rights of girls, sexual and reproductive health and comprehensive sex education, in strict compliance with barrier measures including social distancing, washing hands and wearing masks, no shaking hands when greeting, coughing or sneezing in the crease of the elbow.
- **Togo:** UNFPA supported the Ministry of Social Action and Gender Promotion in the formulation of a national response plan to combat GBV and protect vulnerable and elderly people from COVID19. This plan is currently being finalized. UNFPA has also equipped 13 listening centers throughout the country with hand-washing devices (02 per center), masks and hydroalcoholic gels to ensure the continuity of services in these listening centers and in the fight against GBV.

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

- In 4 countries, there is a significant risk of a contraceptive stockouts in Cameroon, Gabon, Gambia and Mauritania.
- 645,930 couple-years of protection for contraceptives procured by UNFPA, including condoms in Benin (41,152), Chad (203,583), Senegal (281,195) and Sierra Leone (120,000)

Country examples:

- **Niger:** A system has been put in place to ensure accurate quantification of contraceptives and other reproductive health commodities. UNFPA supported the estimation of contraceptive needs of service delivery points on this basis, UNFPA supports the transportation cost of contraceptives to the last mile.
- **Liberia:** UNFPA is supporting community outreach services to improve access to family planning commodities in Monrovia and its environs. 22 local market-based commodity distribution have served 19,689 women and girls in the last 30 days. FP mobile services are scheduled to be initiated this week targeting initially 5 urban-slum communities. UNFPA also supports the distribution of contraceptives to the last mile during this COVID-19 crisis.
- **Sierra Leone:** Contraceptives and lifesaving maternal health medicines have been pre-positioned to cover all 16 districts and 24 hospitals in Sierra Leone to ensure a minimum of six months' supply is available. The priority is to prevent stock-outs that may arise as a result of restricted inter-district movements and deviation of resources to the pandemic response. Valued at \$361,661.46, the contraceptives and lifesaving maternal health medicines will protect an estimated 120,000 couples from unintended pregnancies for a year period.
- **Togo:** The country has sufficient stocks of condoms acquired in 2019 and 2020 by UNFPA and the national side and is not currently at risk of shortages. However, UNFPA is monitoring the orders of condoms for 2021.



Generations of midwives join hands to achieve transformative results.

© UNFPA Benin

Country examples:

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, with UNICEF as Lead and WHO as Co-Lead. The group is running a media campaign to raise awareness on COVID-19 response through a multilingual website. The website includes some local languages mostly spoken by people across the region. It is also undertaking a social research aimed at generating quality information and insights into how risk communication and community engagement activities could be better framed, packaged and delivered to enhance response to COVID-19 pandemic.
- In Congo, UNFPA is running awareness campaigns by young people by supporting the production of a spot made by young people of the ROJALNU network. The clip was seen by over 10,000 people on social media networks. They also launched the #TossaMibeko (follow the rules in Lingala) campaign.
- As part of the digital campaign targeting young people #JOGCICOVID19 in Senegal, UNFPA distributed over 1,500 masks to youth organisations through the National Youth Council.

Benin

- [Coronavirus hors de ce monde!!](#)
- [Le Bénin mobilise un réseau de 100 acteurs de l'innovation et entrepreneurs pour renforcer la lutte contre la pandémie de COVID-19](#)
- <https://coronavirus.mysemecity.com/taskforce/>

Burkina Faso

- [Lutte contre le COVID-19 : UNFPA contribue au déploiement de 750 volontaires](#)
- [Lutte contre le COVID-19 : UNFPA fait don de Kits de protection](#)
- [Lutte contre le Covid-19 : UNFPA Contribue à la dotation des centres de formation professionnelle en matériels d'hygiène](#)
- [Déploiement de 15 000 volontaires contre le Covid-19 : Tous engagés, tous à y gagner !](#)

Cameroon

- [UNFPA PARTNERING WITH HEALTH CENTERS TO ENSURE SAFE BIRTH AMIDST CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC](#)
- [JOURNEE MONDIALE DE LA SAGE-FEMME : Une Héroïne de la Santé Maternelle](#)

Côte d'Ivoire

- [UNFPA accompagne une campagne de communication des jeunes contre le covid-19 en Côte d'Ivoire](#)

Ghana

- [2020-international-day-end-obstetric-fistula-commemorated-ghana-amidst-covid-19](#)
- [Unfpa-marks-international-day-family-health-workers-pentecost-isolation-centre](#)
- <https://ghana.unfpa.org/en/videos>
- <https://www.facebook.com/ghanaunfpa>

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](#)
- <https://mobile.twitter.com/unfpaguinebxo/status/1264982430454353925>

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](#)

Mali

- [COVID-19 ET VIOLENCES CONJUGALES](#)
- [BULLETIN UNIS DANS L'ACTION SPÉCIAL COVID-19](#)

Country examples:

Niger

- [Riposte contre COVID-19 - UNFPA Niger](#)
- [Production de Bavette ou cache-nez made in Niger](#)

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.](#)

Senegal

- [Fistula "je n'ai qu'une seule envie guérir de la fistule](#)
- [Plaidoyer-pour-la-protection-des-sages-femmes-face-au-covid-19](#)
- [USD 745.000 de FAO, ONUFEMMES et UNFPA pour soutenir l'initiative conjointe « le panier de la ménagère »](#)

Sao Tome and Principe

- [UNFPA soutient l'installation de lavabos à l'entrée du PMI](#)
- [UNFPA soutient la concrétisation du plan d'action du ministère de la Jeunesse](#)
- [l'hôpital de campagne en opération](#)

Sierra Leone:

- [UNFPA Sierra Leone celebrates midwives on the International Day of the Midwife](#)
- [UNFPA supports the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to preposition contraceptives & life-saving maternal health medicines](#)

Togo:

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

The Gambia:

- [UNFPA supports quarantined individuals and recognises efforts frontline health workers](#)
- [Dignity kits improve wellbeing and meet hygiene needs of women and girls amid COVID-19](#)
- [Advancing women and youth participation in decision making during COVID-19 and beyond](#)



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A donation of protection kits which aims to ensure the protection of health workers for the continuity of the supply of care and health services. © UNFPA Burkina Faso

Confirmed Cases and Deaths (UNFPA programme countries) WHO, 4 June 2020

Country	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Benin	244	3
Burkina Faso	884	53
Cameroon	6,752	200
Cabo Verde	477	5
Central African Republic	1,189	4
Chad	820	66
Congo Republic	632	20
Côte d'Ivoire	3,110	35
Equatorial Guinea	1,043	12
Gabon	2,902	20
Gambia	26	1
Ghana	8,548	38
Guinea	3,933	23
Guinea-Bissau	1,346	9
Liberia	316	28
Mali	1,386	79
Mauritania	668	31
Niger	961	65
Nigeria	11,166	315
Sao Tome and Principe	295	10
Senegal	3,932	45
Sierra Leone	909	47
Togo	452	13
TOTAL	51,991	1,122

Confirmed Cases by Country and Region

Region ● Arab States ● Asia and the Pacific ● East and Southern Africa ● Eastern Europe and Central Asia ● Latin America and the Caribbean ● West and Central Africa

