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Reporting Period: as of 17 April 2020

Eastern Europe and Central Asia Region

COVID-19
Situation Report No. 1

United Nations Population Fund

Highlights

- All countries have reported COVID-19 cases except Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, with Turkey being the most affected.
- Restrictions, lockdowns and border closures are affecting operations, supply chains and procurement of personal protective equipment and other supplies resulting in shortages.[1]
- Lockdowns make it difficult to reach and assist vulnerable populations, including migrants, refugees, people with disabilities, minorities, elderly, pregnant and lactating women, survivors of gender-based violence and homeless people.
- There is limited access to some regions in Kosovo (UNSCR 1244*), and difficulties in coordination of service delivery in several countries due to changing referral pathways and reporting lines.
- UNFPA is working with governments and partners to maintain sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence services, including psychosocial support, and support to elderly people.
- UNFPA has mobilized the youth across the region to support COVID-19 prevention and response, and vulnerable communities, including the elderly.
- UNFPA joined UN Women in rolling out a regional rapid gender assessment on COVID-19 impact.

 * All references to Kosovo should be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

[1] Countries with restrictions: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan. Border closures: Albania, Armenia, BiH, Georgia, Moldova, North Macedonia, Tajikistan, Turkey Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kosovo).

Situation in Numbers

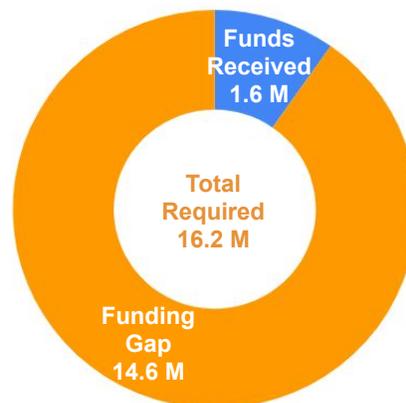**93,019 Confirmed COVID-19 Cases**

1,993 COVID-19 Deaths

Source: WHO April 17, 2020

Key Population Groups

3 M Pregnant Women

63 M Women of Reproductive Age

53 M Young People (age 10-24)

26 M Older Persons (age 65+)

Funding Status for Region (US$)

Funds Received 1.6 M

Total Required 16.2 M

Funding Gap 14.6 M

Regional Response Summary

The UNFPA response in the region aligns with the 2030 Agenda, the 2020 WHO Global Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Global Humanitarian Response Plan, and the UNFPA COVID-19 Global Response Plan.

Coordination

Playing a key role in existing and new coordination structures, UNFPA is a member of the UN interagency coordination mechanisms, primarily the UN Country Team and other related forums such as the UN coordination COVID-19 groups including the Security Management Teams.

UNFPA also leads several mechanisms that bring together government, civil society and other UN agencies, such as the SRH working group and the coordination body for gender-based violence (GBV) in emergencies. Across the region, UNFPA country offices are working in close collaboration with the ministries of health and donor and development partners. National governments are managing the overall coordination.

Continuity of SRH interventions, including protection of health workforce

UNFPA Country Offices have supported continuity of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) interventions by:
- Reshaping SRH and rights interventions in response to the pandemic;
- Developing national guidelines, protocols and recommendations on antenatal and mother and child services in the COVID-19 context;[1]
- Developing and translating materials for SRHR service providers and pregnant women in local languages; [2]
- Training medical staff on providing maternal health services in COVID-19 contexts; [3] and
- Providing information on personal protective equipment (PPE) for pregnant women and SRHR service providers in countries affected by COVID-19. [4]

Country examples:
- **Albania:** provided food and hygiene kits to people in the most remote areas.
- **Armenia:** developed guidelines on COVID-19 for older people with a local partner.
- **Kyrgyzstan**: provided 5,000 dignity sets for women quarantined in observation points and maternities.
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina**: translated and distributed guidelines for pregnant women (including for migrant women in Pashto, Arabic and Farsi languages), older people and youth, and SRH services for migrant women.
- **Moldova:** trained all Youth-friendly Health Centers, online, on minimum initial service package (MISP) for SRH in the context of COVID-19, with the goal of ensuring continuity of services to young people. UNFPA is also leading COVID-19 communications on pregnancy, organizing webinars for women, and sharing interviews with healthcare providers on key topics such as pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding;
- **North Macedonia:** distributed 2,800 hygiene items to 3 public health institutions and supported healthcare providers in maternities to tailor protocols and guidelines for pregnant women and CO
- **Turkey:** procured PPE for its 400 health and protection service providers attending the needs of most vulnerable groups among Turkish and refugee/migrant population (including agricultural workers, people with HIV, LGBTI, GBV survivors, elderly, people with disabilities) in more than 20 provinces. COVID19 has been mainstreamed into services via screening and referral, and case management. COVID19 service protocols have been rolled out on SRH, GBV, MHPSS and other protection topics.
- **Northern Syria (crossborder)**: imported and distributed 8,000 vials of Sayana press (long-term female contraception) to various service delivery points, and re-allocated up to $60,000 so far for PPE procurement, to ensure continuity of supplies of modern contraceptives and other reproductive health commodities to Syrian women in Northern Syria.

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[1] Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

[2] Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan

[3] Albania, Belarus,, Moldova

[4] Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kosovo*, North Macedonia and Uzbekistan

* All references to Kosovo should be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Country examples continued:

- **Ukraine:** distributed SRH kits for complicated deliveries, post exposure preventive kits, and contraceptives, in health facilities located along the contact line. One of these kits contains PPE for health workers.
- **Uzbekistan**: initiated a rapid needs assessment for female health care workers, through social networks of medical professionals throughout the country, to identify challenges and urgent needs.

Addressing GBV

UNFPA is addressing GBV by:

- Convening partners, as a co-leader of the regional Issue-Based Coalition on Gender, jointly with UN Women, to consolidate a resource package on gender equality and the impact of COVID-19. The resource materials, along with a joint UNFPA/UN-Women statement, were shared with regional coordinators;
- Joining UN Women in rolling out a regional rapid gender assessment on COVID-19 impact on the main challenges faced by women and men, including their economic empowerment and vulnerability, and how the changing situation is affecting their access to SRH services;
- Assisting countries with sharing good practices to address the urgent needs of vulnerable women and girls, especially those who are victims of GBV through the regional knowledge-sharing mechanism on COVID-19; and
- Supporting governments with adopting standards and protocols on provision of services in women's shelters during COVID-19[5], disseminating information and supporting hotlines for victims of GBV[6], supplying the shelters with necessary hygiene products and PPE[7], promoting men and boys' engagement in prevention of GBV[8], and working with the private sector to address prevention of GBV (Turkey). All country offices continue to advocate for prevention of GBV and ensure that governments address this issue within their COVID-19 response.

Country examples:

- **Albania:** provided technical support to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection for the development of SOPs for GBV Emergency Shelters.
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina**: chairs the GBV Working Group as part of the mixed migration response and is reviewing referral pathways in view of Covid-19 arrangements. Psychosocial support is being provided online and directly works with women. Vulnerable young men are identified and referred for assistance through ongoing Boys on the Move program. UNFPA provided 50 parcels for vulnerable Roma community, and is currently procuring basic food and protective parcels for three women's shelters and centers for vulnerable older people.
- **Belarus**: partnered with A1 mobile operator to make the national domestic violence hotline toll-free to subscribers.
- **Kosovo*:** with UNDP, delivered over 8,500 food items to shelters for GBV survivors as a form of immediate assistance during the COVID-19 lockdown.
- **Kyrgyzstan:** UNFPA leads and coordinates the GBV Sub-cluster and is an active member of the protection cluster.
- **Moldova**: jointly with UN Women, provided hygienic kits and food products to 16 shelters.
- **Ukraine:** provided technical support to the Ministry of Social Policy to develop its response master plan and normative documents on COVID-19 response relating to social services for GBV survivors and persons at risk.
- **Uzbekistan:** provided food, medicines and sanitary items to 3 shelters in Bukhara and Samarkand, which collectively house more than 70 GBV survivors, including some with disabilities and some with children. Together with the Gender Commission of the Senate, launched a "No to Violence" channel in popular Telegram messenger to provide information and contacts to prevent and respond to GBV
- **Turkey**: providing protection services to male, female and LGBTI survivors of GBV during the covid19 outbreak via online, on phone and one to one case management.

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[5] Turkey, Albania, Kyrgyzstan and Kosovo*

[6] Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan

[7] Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan

[8] Belarus, Georgia, Turkey and Uzbekistan

* All references to Kosovo should be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Assessment on the health and socioeconomic impact of COVID-19

In several countries UNFPA collaborates on, or conducts its own, crisis impact assessment, including specific challenges for young people with disabilities and key populations.

Country examples:

- **Bosnia and Herzegovina:** leading efforts on socio-economic impact assessment, prioritising needs of youth, GBV survivors and elderly population and is working to provide platforms for experience exchange through the social media.
- **Kosovo*:** conducting a rapid assessment of socio-economic impact of COVID-19, to be followed by a comprehensive assessment.
- **Moldova**: providing data: the COVID-19 Moldova dashboard http://arcg.is/1aWjGC is being replicated in other countries.
- **North Macedonia:** participating in assessments conducted by several pillars of the health and socio-economic UN Team.

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Risk communication and community engagement

UNFPA offices have used a range of materials and channels to reach people, including the most vulnerable, with information about COVID-19 and how they can protect themselves and mitigate negative consequences of quarantines and other response measures. A set of WHO Q&As on COVID-19 and pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding were translated into national languages and disseminated on social media. Under UNFPA leadership, the regional Issue Based Coalition on Gender Equality issued key messages and recommendations for ensuring focus on gender within the response to COVID-19.

All country offices have developed, or are developing, translation of corporate guidance documents and other information materials, and country-specific materials. These are focusing on pregnancy-related questions, GBV, engaging men, older people and other issues. Materials are being disseminated through social media channels
.
UNFPA has promoted risk communication and community engagement through:
- Communication platforms to reach as many people as possible.
- Interventions to raise awareness, activism and engagement, including with communities.
- Mobilization with Honorary Ambassadors, celebrity partners, youth networks and other partners and influencers.

Country examples:

Belarus: provided information for pregnant women and new mothers to the Belarus-based Flo App and reproductive health platform with its 30 million users worldwide. UNFPA also partnered with the private sector to equip Red Cross volunteers with PPE, especially for their efforts in reaching lonely elderly people who are homebound due to health and/or social reasons.

Georgia: supported a communication campaign to encourage men to equality share house work and child care burdens. UNFPA delivered kits with information and essential supplies to older people as part of its 60+Clubs programme.

Kazakhstan: providing COVID-19 information for pregnant and breastfeeding women as well as the leaflet on gender-based violence were published in the media (https://bit.ly/34eJ2Vt; https://bit.ly/2Ka4jpR).
Four separate video clips for People with disabilities with sign language have been produced in Kazakh and Russian and disseminated widely including through different TV channels https://kazakhstan.unfpa.org/videos.
A communications campaign to engage fathers and promote messaging preventing violence during quarantine have been widely disseminated across social media.

Tajikistan: supported risk communication and community engagement campaigns in remote areas covering different aspects of SRH, Family planning and gender, including through youth networks.

Ukraine: together with youth movement Teenergizer, UNFPA is providing online peer-to-peer psychosocial counselling and information to young people (particularly youth living with HIV) affected by quarantine.

Turkey: produced information, education and communications materials on COVID-19 and SRH and GBV services, private sector response, and initiated social/tv media campaign with celebrities messaging leave no one behind during Covid19 was initiated.

Multi-countries: youth networks have been mobilized to reach different segments of the population in **Moldova** and **Albania**, and TV personality and philanthropist UNFPA Honorary Ambassador Maria Efrosinina is communicating GBV-related messages in **Ukraine**.

Media & Communications

UNFPA Eastern Europe and Central Asia offices are actively engaged in media outreach to raise awareness, share guidance, and showcase achievements. Here are external media products shared widely:

Web stories:
-COVID-19 affects **Ukraine** health systems already compromised by conflict
-Gender-based violence in **Kosovo** spikes amid pandemic, shelters need support
-Virtual story time with celebrity dads in **Georgia** enlivens coronavirus self-isolation
-New online dashboard enables real-time monitoring of COVID-19 cases in **Moldova**
-Young volunteers in **Moldova**: #We Stay Home Because We Care, And What About You?

UNFPA experts on TV:
-on COVID and SRH in Turkey: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w06IMIkcqi4
-on COVID and GBV in Turkey: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDkSH0rKcig
-on COVID and GBV in Kosovo:https://youtu.be/scAM6Nues0o

Leveraging partnership with Flo period tracker app:
UNFPA-branded infographic on COVID and pregnancy
UNFPA-branded infographic on COVID and breastfeeding

Regional social media assets:
Gender lens gif: https://twitter.com/unfpaeecaro/status/1241010701025579013?s=20
Q&As on pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding
Social media Trello board

Social media highlights:
-GBV increase in Ukraine: https://twitter.com/unfpaeecaro/status/1242795423879880704?s=20
-UNFPA Armenia supports GBV shelters (video): https://twitter.com/unfpaeecaro/status/1245604838387269635?s=20
-Ob-Gyn gives advice on COVID and pregnancy (video, Moldova):
https://www.facebook.com/334704309901050/videos/218268255929908/
-Popular older couple/Eurovision performers give advice to older people (video, Moldova):
https://www.facebook.com/334704309901050/videos/2374768442820898/
- Videos on COVID-19 for people with disabilities in Kazakhstan
https://www.facebook.com/UnfpaInKazakhstan/videos/2552286068323400/
- Agreement with Euronews Albania to provide COVID19 information for its web platform and social media channels

Country	Confirmed Cases	Deaths
Albania	494	25
Armenia	1,135	18
Azerbaijan	1,253	13
Belarus	3,728	36
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,116	41
Georgia	336	3
Kazakhstan	1,295	16
Kosovo*	397	9
Kyrgyzstan	466	5
Republic of Moldova	2,049	46
North Macedonia	974	45
Serbia	4,873	99
Tajikistan	0	0
Turkey	69,392	1,518
Turkmenistan	0	0
Ukraine	4,162	115
Uzbekistan	1,349	4
Total EECARO	**93,019**	**1,993**

Confirmed Cases by Country and Region

Region ● APRO ● ASRO ● EECARO ● ESARO ● LACRO ● WCARO