

COVID-19 Pandemic Response Plan - Iraq 2020



COVID- 19 PANDEMIC: CONTEXT

The COVID- 19 pandemic constitutes the largest global public health crisis in a century, with daunting public health and socioeconomic challenges.

Governments all around the world are taking unprecedented measures to limit the spread of the virus, ramping up health systems and restricting movements of millions.

The Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government are no exceptions. With curfews imposed across the country, the pandemic has disrupted access to life-saving sexual and reproductive health services and worsened existing inequalities for women and girls.

The pandemic and curfews in place have led to a decrease in the reporting of gender-based violence cases. Nevertheless, increased tensions in

households due to confinement pose new risks and potentially fuel pre-existing forms of GBV, particularly domestic violence perpetrated by intimate partners or other family members.

With the reports of GBV increasing amid COVID- 19 in addition to lack of access due to COVID- 19 movement restrictions and adjacent measures such as the closure of women community centres, coupled with decreased of GBV humanitarian actors' presence, the load has been shifted totally on government to ensure the safety of those at risk of GBV in their homes.

UNFPA is working with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to ensure that no one is left behind and women and girls are taken care of.

#COVID19

**“PLEASE JOIN US IN STANDING UP
FOR THE DIGNITY AND HEALTH OF WOMEN
AND GIRLS WHEN THEY NEED US MOST.”**

– DR. NATALIA KANEM, UNFPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

- 1** Strengthen the national and local health system capacity to ensure access to GBV and SRH services;
- 2** Strengthen operational support, logistics, and support to the global supply chain;
- 3** Provide risk communication and community engagement for information and stigma reduction;
- 4** Access to SRH and GBV services for women and girls;
- 5** Impact assessment.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

US\$ 1,680,444
for the Iraq COVID-19 response

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1** Continuity of sexual and reproductive health services and interventions, including protection of the health workforce
- 2** Addressing gender-based violence
- 3** Ensuring the supply of modern contraceptives and reproductive health commodities

ACCELERATOR INTERVENTIONS

- 1.** Leaving No One Behind
- 2.** Data
- 3.** Risk Communication and Stigma Reduction
- 4.** Youth Engagement

1

STRENGTHEN THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL HEALTH SYSTEM CAPACITY TO ENSURE ACCESS TO GBV AND SRH SERVICES

\$ 300,000

UNFPA supports the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to strengthen the national and local health system capacity to ensure access to gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health services.

UNFPA works to ensure that **women and girls, especially pregnant women, including those in quarantine, have timely and safe access to health and protection services.**

UNFPA is building the capacity of case managers, social workers and front line service providers on self-care during the pandemic. The Fund with its partners plans to train doctors, midwives, and nurses on how to deliver women with or who may have COVID- 19.

Through the training, UNFPA will focus on mitigating the infection control measures to ensure safe emergency C-sections for COVID- 19 positive pregnant women.

Safe pregnancies and childbirth depend on strict adherence to infection prevention control measures against **COVID-19**

Learn more: unfpa.org/COVID19



2 STRENGTHEN OPERATIONAL SUPPORT, LOGISTICS, AND SUPPORT TO THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

\$ 680,000

UNFPA is acting to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on **reproductive health supplies, including modern contraceptives and maternal health medicines as well as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).**

UNFPA is supporting the Ministry of Health to provide online information sharing and reproductive health and family planning services.

UNFPA is providing Personal Protective Equipment to health workers, case managers, social workers and drivers in the health facilities and women centres as well as those part of the mobile teams.

UNFPA will continue to provide dignity kits to serve the intimate needs of women and girls across the country.

UNFPA women centres are also working closely with the Directorates of Health to sew masks and produce sanitisers and distribute them to the most vulnerable, such as prisoners, school students, government employees in the field and women and girls in the women centres.

Health workers should
be provided with personal
protective equipment
when treating patients
with **COVID-19**

Learn more: unfpa.org/COVID19



3 PROVIDE RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR INFORMATION AND STIGMA REDUCTION

\$ 320,444

Prevention starts with awareness and community engagement. To help inform the population in camps and non-camps settings, especially pregnant women and girls, UNFPA will distribute dignity kits with IEC materials on COVID- 19 prevention.

In the maternity wards where there are women who may have COVID- 19, UNFPA is distributing awareness brochures on COVID- 19, self-care and hygiene measures to be followed amid the pandemic for both mothers and newborn.

UNFPA will disseminate messages on domestic violence amid COVID- 19 through text messages.

UNFPA is also working with partners to produce IEC materials on the symptoms or COVID- 19 and the prevention methods and will distribute in camps, non-camps and host community settings.

UNFPA with youth networks have developed youth-oriented awareness messages and will provide counselling services to adolescents and young people during the pandemic.

UNFPA is working with the Ministry of Youth & Sports to engage 10 volunteer groups to conduct peer-to-peer awareness sessions and provide necessary information to young people and adolescents. The volunteers will also contribute to the disinfection and sterilization campaigns.

New ways of providing information and support to young people for sexual and reproductive health need to be established during the **COVID-19** pandemic response

Learn more: unfpa.org/COVID19



4 ACCESS TO SRH AND GBV SERVICES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

\$ 330,000

UNFPA priority remains to **ensure women and girls have access to life-saving, multisectoral services for women and girls**, especially pregnant women, survivors of gender-based violence and the most at-risk women and girls.

UNFPA will train medics on the transfer of pregnant women who have or may have COVID- 19 to maternity facilities based on protocols specified by the Ministry of Health.

UNFPA is supporting the continuity of case management in camps and non-camps areas and has established remote psycho-social support services, through mobile teams, phone calls, and other communications methods such as the gender-based violence helplines supported by UNFPA and partners.

The Fund will also activate the mobile teams to provide awareness on COVID- 19 and gender-based violence amid confinement but also to ensure the safety of survivors of gender-based violence.

UNFPA will continue to coordinate with government entities to ensure referral of GBV cases among actors.

Pregnant women with respiratory illnesses must be treated with utmost priority due to increased risk of adverse outcomes from **COVID-19**

Learn more: unfpa.org/COVID19



UNFPA leads the gender-based violence sub-cluster and the reproductive health working group and will continue to work closely with other clusters to **reduce the spread and negative impacts of COVID- 19 in Iraq.**

UNFPA with partners will establish a help desk for case management. The GBV sub-cluster has conducted a rapid assessment of the impact of COVID- 19 on gender-based violence and GBV services provision across the country.

The **COVID-19** pandemic may increase women's domestic burden, making their share of household responsibilities even heavier

Learn more: unfpa.org/COVID19





CONTACT INFORMATION

Himyar Abdulmoghni
DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE
abdulmoghni@unfpa.org

Salwa Moussa
COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST
smoussa@unfpa.org

