Responding to COVID-19: WHO's Presence & Action at the Country Level

MS COVID-19 Briefing, 13 May 2021
WHO’s Global Architecture to support 194 Member States

152 Offices in countries, territories & areas

Distribution of WHO Offices
- African region: 47
- Region of the Americas: 27
- Eastern Mediterranean region: 20
- European region: 32
- South-East Asian region: 11
- Western Pacific region: 15

‘Surge’ in WHO’s country presence for COVID-19

71% of WHO’s 2020 SPRP FUNDS UTILIZED AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL (US $896.9million)

217 MEDICAL TEAMS (EMT) AND GOARN DEPLOYMENTS INTERNATIONALLY (7 May 2021)

60% INTERNATIONAL STAFF REPURPOSED
International technical staff (60%), national technical staff (33%) and general services staff (53%) were repurposed to COVID-19

1200+ RAPIDLY RECRUITED NON-STAFF AND STAFF
Across over 100 WHO country offices, more than 1200 new non-staff and staff members were recruited to support with the COVID-19 response

95% WHO COUNTRY OFFICES RECEIVED BACKSTOPPING FROM REGIONAL OR SUBREGIONAL OFFICES

73% WHO COUNTRY OFFICES RECEIVED BACKSTOPPING FROM HEADQUARTERS
Add narrative ‘texture’ to global reporting

Highlight work with- & roles of partners

Foster organizational learning & sharing

Highlight challenges faced in countries

And....

Illustrate how WHO’s Country Offices are delivering on the GPW13 Strategic Shifts & Transformation Agenda to support countries in the pandemic response
Initiating early action

62% of WHO country offices (WCOs) activated their Incident Management Support Team before the first reported case of COVID-19 in the country. 22% WCOs activated IMST before COVID-19 declared a PHEIC (30 Jan)

By Feb 2020, more than half (55%) WCOs had initiated or supported MoH to initiate health sector / health cluster meetings

Convening & leading partners

87% WCOs took lead role, (chairing or main technical partner) in the UNCT response & 60% concurrently led in the ‘health first’ pillar of the UNSERF for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID

Resource mobilization: 84% WCOs raised funding for their work in 2019-20 - 46% of which was for COVID-19 response, and 21% for UHC.

59% WCOs played a lead role in the donor coordination mechanisms

Supporting multisectoral action: 97% Countries/areas reported functional multi-sectoral, multi-partner coordination mechanisms for COVID-19 preparedness & response

Supporting country contributions to the global agenda

By May 2020, 68% of offices had initiated support to participate in R&D efforts – incl. Solidarity Therapeutics Trials & Unity Studies

PAKISTAN: Early action & coordination of partners & donors to mobilize required funds

SOMALIA: Leadership across Govt. entities & partners including the UN Country Team for coordinated preparedness & response planning

COSTA RICA: Leadership on gender, equity & rights here to address needs of indigenous people

MALDIVES: Supported multisectoral action & community engagement to address needs & manage risks of a large population of returning migrant workers

Full Case Studies here
## Differentiated approach to DRIVE IMPACT in countries

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Policy dialogue</th>
<th>Strategic support</th>
<th>Technical assistance</th>
<th>Service delivery</th>
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<td>to develop response policy / plans to meet countries needs &amp; respond to global priorities</td>
<td>to improve performance &amp; sustainability of the response &amp; protection of the health system</td>
<td>to address specific bottlenecks &amp; build response capacity at national &amp; subnational levels</td>
<td>to provide services, supplies &amp; logistics where needed</td>
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### Adapting global guidance to local contexts

- By Feb 2020, 81% of WHO Country Offices (WCOs) had initiated support for the development of the National Response Plan.

### Data for decision making

- By March 2020, 81% of country offices had supported governments to establish the issuance of weekly Sitreps.

### Reviewing & learning

- 47 countries have now conducted at least 1 Intra-Action Review of COVID-19 response or equivalent.

### Supporting whole of society approaches

- **97%** Countries/areas have a national COVID-19 RCCE Plan
- **90%** Countries/areas using risk-based approaches for managing mass gatherings during COVID-19

### Maintaining essential health services

- **87%** Countries/areas have defined essential health services to be maintained during COVID-19

### Building capacity

- By March 2020, **79%** of WCOs (87% of FCVs) had already initiated capacity building efforts in key technical areas

### Targeted support to priority areas & countries

- **100%** Countries/areas have COVID-19 laboratory test capacity in place
- **100%** Countries/areas reporting routinely through established sentinel or non-sentinelILI, SARI, ARI surveillance system
- **89%** Countries/areas have clinical referral system in place to care for COVID-19 cases

### Providing critical supplies

- By March 2020, **83%** of WCOs (90% of FCVs) had initiated support for supply chain and procurement
- 19M PCR tests, 200M masks, 8.6M face shields, 45M gloves shipped globally
- 12,000 ICU Beds provided through WHO surge mechanisms
- COVAX shipped over 59 million vaccines to 122 participants (as of 10 May)

### Differentiated approach to DRIVE IMPACT in countries
Policy dialogue
to develop response policy / plans to meet countries needs & respond to global priorities

Strategic support
to improve performance & sustainability of the response & protection of the health system

Technical assistance
to address specific bottlenecks & build response capacity at national & subnational levels

Service delivery
to provide services, supplies & logistics where needed

IRAN: Coordinated policy advice from 3 levels of WHO
As a result of a WHO led an expert Mission to Iran n March 2020, and the sharing of experiences in China & elsewhere, national health authorities were able to act upon several priority areas for scale-up. WHO also provides daily epi and health promotion updates for the entire international community in Iran to support in Organizational decision making.

SAUDI ARABIA: WHO supports an ‘event free’ Hajj
The national Hajj committee conducted a risk assessment & consulted WHO before putting in place comprehensive set of measures that were ultimately successful in preventing an outbreak during last years pilgrimage.

CAMBODIA: WHO keeps focus on Malaria elimination during the COVID-19 response
Despite COVID-19 & the mass movement of migrant workers returning from Thailand, strong national action and WHO support with the drafting of an operational plan, deployment of field epidemiologists and community efforts has ensured Cambodia remains on track to eliminate Malaria 2025. In fact, Malaria cases continued to decline during COVID-19 with 83% fewer cases in Nov 2020 compared to Nov 2019 and Malaria testing increasing by 40% over the same timeframe.

YEMEN: WHO brings in critical capacities & supplies to prevent a worsening humanitarian disaster
Iraq’s Basrah University and WHO innovate to overcome global supply challenges by developing & dispatching locally produced Virus Transport Medium in support of early national COVID-19 containment efforts in March 2020.

GUINEA-BISSAU: WHO’s support to increase access to oxygen
A Biomedical engineer has been deployed to rapidly assess medical oxygen & biomedical capacity in 10 hospitals. Ongoing support, training & funding for the restoration of Oxygen Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) aim to improve future clinical outcomes for COVID-19 patients and create a stronger health system for future.

IRAQ: WHO supports the local development of testing supplies
Despite COVID-19 & the mass movement of

MOLDOVA: WHO supports Joint Intra-Action Review
The Ministry of Health Labour and Social Protection. 100 national/sub-national institutions to review & document best practices & challenges in the COVID-19 response. Future actions have identified in areas of financing, capacity building, information management & development of supply stockpiles.

SOUTH AFRICA: WHO deploys country office staff to worst affected provinces to support the country’s decentralized response
In States of Gauteng, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Free State, teams of WHO staff, consultants and epidemiologists have been stationed in the provincial “war rooms” to provide day-to-day technical support with a focus on collection & reporting of COVID-19 data.

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# Perspectives of WHO’s Representatives

**Key enablers & challenges in the COVID-19 response**

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<th>CHALLENGES</th>
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<td><strong>INTERNAL (WHO)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Early repurposing of staff &amp; mobilization of funds</td>
<td>Human &amp; financial resources to meet needs</td>
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<td>WHO’s leadership role &amp; partners’ trust</td>
<td>Difficult working conditions for prolonged periods</td>
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<td>Quality of support from RO/HQ (incl. supply)</td>
<td>Managing concurrent emergencies</td>
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<td>Collaboration with the highest national authorities</td>
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<td><strong>EXTERNAL</strong></td>
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<td>Effective National leadership &amp; coordination</td>
<td>Severe disruption of the global supply chain</td>
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<td>Previous response experiences &amp; capacities</td>
<td>Delayed/ limited access to data for decision making</td>
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<td>Existing partner coordination – UNCT, Hlth Cluster</td>
<td>Sub-optimal multi-sectoral collaboration</td>
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<td>Effective communication in place with the public</td>
<td>Limited emergency prep &amp; response capacities</td>
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More about WHO’s presence & work in countries

**Country Case Studies 2020**

**Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic: WHO’s action in countries, territories and areas, 2020**

https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240019225

**Weekly Ops Updates**

**Weekly Operational Update on COVID-19**

03 May 2021

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports

**Country Presence Report 2021**

WHO presence in countries, territories and areas

2021 Report

https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/341308/9789240026360-eng.pdf
Introductions:

Supporting the Republic of Mali

Mbaranga Gasarabwe
Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator

Dr Jean-Pierre Baptiste
WHO Representative, Mali

Supporting the Republic of Uzbekistan

Dr Lianne Kuppens
WHO Representative, Uzbekistan